2003 Fiction Competition • Jenny Wiley and Jessica Lynch • An Appalachian Aesthetic? • CASS 20th Anniversary

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES • EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume 20
Nos. 2 & 3

Now & Then, a tribute to twenty years.

Paying Attention in the Park

11 Mexicans in the park
Celebrating under the biggest oak.
Four generations dancing
Around the many-colored blanket
Absorbing the oak-leaf-fractured golden spring light
Of a Saturday afternoon.

White-haired violin player
Made sure music came from near
The food.

The oldest looked at the newborn baby,
The young and eligible looked electrically at each other.

Everything seemed to disappear then
Except the sun, the music, the dance
and their eyes.
As a group they were largely
Somewhere else.

Visible in the spring sun
Yet not there.
The image seemed to say,
"Gone south. Give us a minute. Be right back."

And they were.
Became re-animated on the park's green carpet.
No longer mostly a still life.

As I shut my eyes to the sun
My 80-year-old grandmother's face appeared on that darkened stage.

It was the quilting talk she gave me long ago.
When I thought the needle was just a
Tool of mischief.

"Every patch means something special. The quilt's got to have 'em all. Take one away and the thing don't balance. That's the quilter's job. Look and see what cloth you got, put it together right and then be kind to it. If you ain't, it'll lose your respect. It'll never go on anybody's bed 'cept maybe the dog's."

And I don't believe Nannie Kate ever knowingly met a Mexican or called the instrument anything but a fiddle.

—Bob Hinkle

Bob Hinkle was raised in Asheville, N.C., attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and has spent much of the rest of his life in New York City. As a long-time writer of poetry, short stories, non-fiction, liner and libretto notes, and music reviews, his memory holds his Appalachian experiences closely and with detail he frequently can't muster when writing about the big city.

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Dedicated to Jane Harris Woodside

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***"Now & Then* gave residents a recognizable portrait. That was the idea anyway. It wouldn't be all poverty, ignorance, and moonshine, nor would it be all self-sufficient and quaint."**

—Pat Arnow

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Now & Then: Is It Really Goodbye?

A Managing Editor Takes a Look Back

In my 10 or so years with the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, I've worked with three editors. Pat Arnow, the first, hired me for the position of media technician, showed me the ropes on a couple of issues of *Now & Then* and the *Journal of the Appalachian Studies Association,* and then left. Pat had come on early in the game, when *Now & Then* was just slightly more than a newsletter but had great potential to open up the area of Appalachian Studies to a broad audience. Taking over from *Now & Then's* first editor, Fred Waage, she made the magazine realize its potential, working with established writers to expand on the various themes that were designed to increase understanding of this diverse region. With Pat, I learned to follow Associated Press style, implanted with our own idiosyncracies (for *Now & Then*); Chicago Manual of Style (for the *Journal*); and to work with authors and other editors.

Next I worked with Jill Oxendine, presently managing editor of the almost completed *Encyclopedia of Appalachia.* Jill was hired temporarily to keep *Now & Then* coming out until a new editor could be found. Too new to the field of publishing a magazine and with no real editorial experience, I declined to volunteer to become editor, knowing full well it would overwhelm me. Jill came in with a practised eye and immediately set to work refining the magazine's format. We met with Jane Hillhouse, of Hillhouse Graphic Design, who has since become our regular cover designer, to set up a new template for the magazine's layout. She made some other suggestions to standardize *Now & Then's* look. The cover on that issue, Rituals and Celebrations, is still the most striking of any that we've put out, in my opinion. Randy Ball, whose work has graced many of *Now & Then's* pages, captured an incredible portrait of a Pow Wow participant in his colorful dance regalia that set off the theme perfectly.

Under Jill's tutelage, I learned about decks (the introductory sentence or two before the start of each story), consistent margins for the entire magazine, and putting a header bar on the cover (with a peek at what the content of the issue is). I began to explore my own rituals for putting a publication together.

Finally, I had the privilege to work with Jane Woodside. Jane's vision carried the magazine to even greater heights. We initiated alternate-year competitions for writers of fiction and poetry. We tapped into a vast well of new Appalachian writers with many talents, some of whom have gone on to establish national reputations. We continued to refine the look of the magazine. And Jane's dedication to the publication extended further than putting out *Now & Then* three times a year. She wanted more people to see the magazine.

Jane developed some low-cost membership drives for the Center, with the magazine as a benefit, that actually worked. She applied for, and got, a small grant from the Council for Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP) that paid for a consultant to come to our offices and develop a plan to increase circulation. Together, Jane and I struggled with limited resources and faced the realization that, even though the plan developed for us took our limitations into consideration, we still couldn't do all we wanted to do. Jane did take great pride in the fact that, by the time she left, the amount generated on a yearly basis by memberships in the Center covered the printing costs of *Now & Then.* Just think what we could have done if we'd had the support to go forward with a major membership campaign, and not just for the magazine but for all the subsidized programs at the Center.

And so, at the beginning of 2003, with a financial crisis hitting the entire State of Tennessee, East Tennessee State University was asked to trim an overall nine percent of its annual budget for the coming fiscal year. What chance did a small non-academic magazine of limited circulation have in an atmosphere of academic panic? Especially in light of the university cancelling the football program, the likelihood of keeping 1.8 persons employed to put out *Now & Then* seemed about as likely as a snowball surviving in a furnace. Despite the outpouring of outrage from our supporters, both readers and writers, Jane Woodside was let go and the future of *Now & Then* remains highly tenuous.

I wanted us to go out with a bang—if, indeed, this is the last issue of *Now & Then* as we've known it—so I asked many of our long-time contributors to send something to me to consider for publication. With no theme this time around, anything having to do with the region would be acceptable. The response was terrific. The variety of articles again reflects the myriad experiences of life in our region. With the 20th anniversary of the Center to celebrate, we also had a chance to hear from many of the folks who had an influence in the development of this institution or who were able to take advantage of the resources the Center has provided over the years. Their voices blend with our writers' to give us a fitting tribute to the Center and to a unique publication.

I want to thank Ted Olson, who has been interim director for the last two years, and Ned Irwin, university archivist at the Archives of Appalachia, for their help in putting the retrospective section of this issue together. They got to bug all those folks when material did not arrive when promised, and they helped with the copyediting. Also, Ned helped find photographs in the Archives to accompany some of the essays.

I also want to thank all the writers for their patience with my meagre attempts at editing and for their kind words of encouragement along the way. It has been great fun putting this issue together.

—Nancy Fischman

NOW & THEN

fiction 2003

APPALACHIAN FICTION COMPETITION

Laying out the contest section for *Now & Then's* 2003 Appalachian Fiction Competition has been bittersweet. It may be the last fiction competition to be held by *Now & Then* and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. More importantly for me, *Now & Then's* former editor-in-chief Jane Woodside, who always interviewed the winning authors, is gone — a casualty of the layoffs last June. Fortunately for me, she went ahead and conducted the interviews with this year's winners, Jeanne McDonald and Brenda Witchger, finishing them up after she left the Center's employ.

As we have been in the past, Jane and I were impressed with the strong collection of stories, from which we had to choose nine to send on to the final judge, Charles Frazier. This year we had 133 writers submit 160 stories, the most entries we've had for the fiction competition. The large number of entries made it very difficult to winnow it down to just nine.

Our thanks go to Charles Frazier, our competition final judge. Frazier won the 1997 National Book Award for his first novel, *Cold Mountain.* Last year he sold the rights to his next book, also set in the Civil War era, to Random House. Of this year's competition, Frazier says, "For the writer, the short story can be a tyrannous form of fiction, brutal in its stringent length requirements. How to create believable characters, places, and situations within such strict compass? The stories I've selected here find different strategies for dealing with these problems, but all impressed me with their refinement, concentration, compression, their ability to suggest a full and peopled world in just a few pages of manuscript."

Thanks also go to our prize sponsors, First Bank & Trust Co. of Abingdon, Va., and the University of Tennessee Press of Knoxville. They have been the sponsors for all our fiction competitions, and we have greatly appreciated their dedication in supporting this endeavor.

—NF

THE FIRST BANK & TRUST FIRST PRIZE

Jeanne McDonald, Knoxville, Tennessee
Sponsor: First Bank & Trust Co., Abingdon, Virginia

In the Realm of Possibility

Jackson lay in bed, listening for Raymond, but the only noise was the house talking. When the wind blew, the windows whistled softly in counterpoint, and the front door moaned through the crack where the molding had broken away.

He turned over and looked at the red neon face of the clock. Three a.m. They were supposed to leave home at 3:30 a.m. to go deer hunting. *These icy roads. He could have had an accident.*

The floor creaked. *He's in a ditch somewhere, bleeding. Wait. There it was, a car door closing.* "Thank you, Lord." He said it aloud, and Sheila, his wife, moaned in her sleep and turned over. The front door opened, and there were two soft clunks as Raymond dropped his boots downstairs. Jackson met him on the landing. "Where the hell have you been?" Jackson was close enough to brush away the snowflakes that glittered in Raymond's hair, but he didn't move.

Cold air hovered around Raymond's shoulders, and Jackson smelled beer and the subtle fragrance of girls. "Well, me and Joe drove a couple of girls down by the lake." Raymond laughed and feigned a punch at Jackson's arm. "You remember doing stuff like that, don't you, Jackson? You're not *that* old."

No, Jackson was not that old. He could have passed for Raymond's brother. He'd been 15 when his sister, Lucy, left home, pregnant by a man whose last name she didn't know. Jackson had seen her and Raymond only a few times in the intervening years, and then, the spring before, Lucy had shown up with Raymond in tow. Jackson thought he was seeing himself in an old photograph — the thick black hair, pale green eyes. No, he was not that old. And it was not that long ago that Jackson himself had come home late like this, and his father, drunk, met him at the door. He still carried the mark — a broken nose that was never treated.

"So then the car wouldn't start," Raymond continued. "We had to let it sit for a while, and then — you know — we had to take the girls home." He waited, watching Jackson's face in the dim light from the downstairs lamp. Then, "We still going deer hunting?"

Jackson laughed. "Think you'd get out of it that easy? Go make coffee while I get dressed." Raymond threw his arm around Jackson's shoulders and walked with him as far as the bathroom door. He was good at that stuff — familiarity — but Jackson wasn't. "You're just like your mother," Jackson said. "Too goddamned wild." He closed the door against Raymond's pained expression and sat down on the narrow edge of the tub, remembering the day Raymond had become part of their household. "It's just for a week or two," Lucy promised that day. "For Christ's sake, see what you can do

He'd been 15 when his sister, Lucy, left home, pregnant by a man whose last name she didn't know. Jackson had seen her and Raymond only a few times in the intervening years.

Melissa Sherrod

Jeanne McDonald

Back in Norfolk, Va., people used to see the young Jeanne McDonald talking to herself while riding her bicycle up and down the street. "I know people thought I was demented or something," she says laughing. But what she was doing in fact was telling herself stories.

McDonald can't remember a time when the impulse to tell stories wasn't there. "I just loved writing and words, and I read a lot as a kid," she explains. She went on to win prizes for her fiction both in high school and while earning a degree in English at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va. After graduation, she took a job teaching in Virginia, and her writing began to take a back seat to the rest of her life. "It just seemed as if I didn't have the time and energy," she says. Marriage, a move to Philadelphia where she once again obtained a teaching position, yet another move to Knoxville, Tenn., in the early 1960s, and the appearance of three children along the way did nothing to nurture her creative endeavors. "There were several years there where I really wasn't writing anything — except in my head," she recalls.

Actually, she was practicing her craft during the nearly 20 years she was employed by the University of Tennessee's (UT) College of Business. As managing editor for publications at the Center for Business and Economic Research, she turned out magazines, economic reports, and various other publications. "I learned a lot there. I think it helped me with my creative writing. I learned to economize, although I do still tend to be pretty descriptive," she admits.

In the mid-1980s, with her children no longer demanding quite as much of her time, she took up creative writing once again. It was as if the floodgates had opened. "Everything came out," she says. "I'd stay up, write in longhand at the kitchen table — since I didn't have a computer — and it just kept coming and coming." It took about a year and a half of sending out submissions to no avail, but eventually publications began accepting her work.

McDonald's writing career has flourished. In fact, since taking early retirement from UT in 1997, she writes full-time. She pens book reviews and articles for *Metro Pulse,* Knoxville's lifestyle magazine, and she has edited two books for the Knoxville Writers' Guild (KWG): *Voices From the Valley,* a collection of fiction, essays, and poetry; and *The Voice of Memory,* a book of memoirs by and interviews with people aged 55 and older. In addition, she is currently the editor of the *East Tennessee Writer,* the newsletter of the KWG, a writers' organization of which she was a founding member. Together with her second husband, journalist Fred Brown, she has co-authored *The Serpent Handlers* and *Growing Up Southern: How the South Shapes Its Writers.*

Of course, she is also still writing fiction, making up for all that lost time. Her short stories have appeared in the Tennessee Arts Commission's anthologies, *Homewords* and *Homeworks,* as well as in various journals and compilations. In 1990, she won the Alex Haley Tennessee Arts Commission Fellowship in Fiction, while in 1996, she was awarded the Washington Prize in Fiction for a novel-in-progress titled "A Random Natural Occurrence." This fall, the University Press of Mississippi pub-

with him. I've tried everything — counseling, cops, juvenile." She opened her hands to the empty air. At thirty-five, she was already broken. Her red-dyed hair was so thin, her scalp gleamed through.

That day, Raymond had slung his backpack over his shoulder and walked into the house without even a wave to his mother.

Jackson and Raymond ate quickly, without speaking. And when they stepped outside into the dark of early morning, they were stunned by the cold. Patches of ice reflected the moon. "Snow's stopped, I think," Jackson said. He leaned his .30/30 against the doorframe while he buttoned up his hunting jacket.

"Jesus," Raymond muttered. "Why do we have to go so early?"

"Raymond, I've explained it. Deer feed at night. When it gets light, they bed down in a laurel thicket or someplace where the wind is below them so they can smell you coming."

They climbed into the truck. The motor bucked and then caught. Jackson fumbled with the heater dial, envying Sheila curled up in their warm bed.

The road stretched before them, empty and white except for a lone rabbit that streaked across the highway from the ice-shrouded grass. Jackson stiffened his arms and pushed back against the seat. "Big day," he said, "the first deer. A sort of coming-of-age." Raymond half-dozed against the ice-glazed window. The heater blew out warm air, and Jackson dialed a country music station on the radio. The singer had a sweet, deep hoarseness that pulled you into her troubles and made them your own.

Raymond shook his head. "Mom used to love country. She'd get loaded and start dancing, cigarette hanging off her lip, ashes dropping. She'd just keep on dancing. Jesus. Just keep on dancing."

Raymond shook his head. "Mom used to love country. She'd get loaded and start dancing, cigarette hanging off her lip, ashes dropping. She'd just keep on dancing. Jesus. Just keep on dancing."

"Heard anything from her lately?" Jackson asked, already knowing the answer.

"You kidding? She palmed me off on you forever."

"Forget women," Jackson said. "Today it's just us men." He rolled down his window, leaned out, and yelled, "Hoooeeee!" His warm breath made a frozen cloud above the empty road.

Raymond laughed and Jackson relaxed, and they rode that way for an hour, music filling the silent spaces between them. Wait. There was the turn-off, and he'd flown right by it. When he braked, the truck slid on black ice, but Jackson steered into the slide and backed up,

lished that prize-winning novel, now called *Water Dreams.* But even before her first novel made it into book stores, she had two more nearly completed.

The Tidewater Virginia native still remembers her delight when she found herself living in East Tennessee more than 40 years ago. "The first month I was in Tennessee, I rode through Cades Cove down a road that was overhung with trees, and I said, 'I love this. I just love this. This is where I need to be.' And that's the way I still feel. Tennessee to me is sort of like a nest. It's shaped by nature." She believes that living in a place shaped by nature has influenced her writing. "It seems as if almost all my books and stories are very much about water and trees and mountains and with people who are involved in nature somehow."

McDonald's prize-winning story, "In the Realm of Possibility," certainly serves as an example of her tendency to place her characters in a natural setting. No hunter herself, she drew on the information she had gleaned from friends at UT's business school to tell the story of the uncle and nephew's pivotal foray into the forest. She loosely based the story on her memories of a hunting accident she had heard about as a child: A bullet fired by a younger schoolmate's uncle had ricocheted and struck the child. "I don't consider 'In the Realm of Possibility' a hunting story, though," she says. "It's really a story about love. I'm interested in family relationships and how people can love each other and yet not express it, how you miss so many opportunities in life to let people know exactly how you feel."

When she isn't writing, interviewing, editing, gardening, or playing with her grandchildren, McDonald is reading other novelists. Her current favorites are Alice Munro and Anita Shreve. Munro especially, says McDonald, has been called an "organic" writer because she shows the inherent elements of all her characters and how they interrelate.

"And that's what I try to do in all my fiction," says McDonald. "I want to create characters real enough to make the reader actually imagine those characters going on with their lives when the story itself ends."

—Jane Harris Woodside

pleased by the high stringy whine of the reverse gear. The headlights picked out the green road sign he was looking for, and he turned in, peering out over the sleepy fields. Sometimes deer grazed in these pastures like cattle, but this morning he saw only frozen weeds and a white moon hanging low over the mountain ahead. "There's a trail up here," he said. "We'll look for scat. That's deer shit to you, Raymond, the sign they're around."

He stopped and turned off the motor and the lights. For a minute they sat still, getting used to the dark. The only sound was the tick of the motor cooling off. Jackson opened the door, and the dim interior bulb came on and cold air rushed in. Jackson led the way up the trail with his flashlight, and Raymond followed, carrying his rifle and the thermos. The column of light picked out the game trail. "We need to find a place off the trail," Jackson said. "See if we can find any scrapes."

They climbed another fifty feet, and Jackson picked out a path to the clearing. "See? That's where the buck scraped his hooves." Leaves and pine needles were scratched away and the ground was raked clean. "When females go into heat, the bucks go into rut. Their necks swell up, and those musk glands on their back legs secrete a heavy odor. They'll rub their antlers against a tree to mark their territory. Then they'll make five or six scrapes, piss down their legs across that musk gland, and when the female comes along, she pisses into the scrape and then walks in it to leave her trail."

"Damn, Jackson," said Raymond, grinning, "how do you know so much?"

Jackson laughed. "You live long enough, son, you learn a few things."

"I wish," said Raymond.

"You will. You'll learn."

"No. I mean, you called me *son.* I wish I *was* your son."

Jackson looked away. He couldn't speak. Something was lacking inside him, something he'd never been given and thus could never give back.

There was no love in the house he grew up in, and no way to learn it. Their mother had left one night while their father slept off a drunk. After that, no one ever mentioned her name.

Raymond persisted. "Did you know my father?"

"Never met him."

"Maybe you and Sheila could adopt me," Raymond ventured. Jackson was as silent as the snowy woods. Raymond whispered, "I love you, Jackson."

"We've got a blind to build," Jackson said. It gave him an excuse to move. They pulled down pine boughs, climbed into the lower branches of an old oak, and camouflaged themselves with the fragrant branches. The cold was numbing. Jackson glanced at Raymond's profile, and in his mind, he heard his words over and over: *I love you, Jackson.*

There was no love in the house he grew up in, and no way to learn it. Their mother had left one night while their father slept off a drunk. After that, no one ever mentioned her name. Their father worked nights, and he and Lucy tried to protect each other, but one day Jackson noticed something womanly about her. Her hips took on a new shift in weight, changing the way she walked. She wore purple lipstick and rimmed her eyes in black pencil. She was gone most nights, and Jackson lay sleepless in the echoing house. Finally, though, he began to relish the independence he had formerly called loneliness. He got a job at the A&P and bought an old car, giving him access to a wider world and the prospect of one day driving away from home. At that age, anything seemed within the realm of possibility.

Jackson glanced over at Raymond, shivering behind the blind. The boy's dark curly hair swung over his eyes and almost touched his shoulders. "Make him cut it," Sheila had said. She'd been furious when Lucy left Raymond with them, but Jackson had said, "Why not?" They'd long since given up on a baby of their own. "It's just that he's so wild," Sheila said, "like Lucy."

"Lucy's never had a chance in this world," Jackson said.

"Well, neither did you, and you've made a good life."

"Average," he said. "It just seems like there ought to be something more."

When he saw Sheila's stricken face, he took her in his lap and petted her, and finally she said she would give Raymond a month, and Raymond, the con man, started charming her.

Light drifted down through the forest. Jackson wanted to make contact with Raymond. "Let's go over the drill," he whispered, his breath crystallizing. At his eye level, a rhododendron leaf was edged in a lacy pattern of frost. It seemed important—that one leaf, its white filigree, its thick, dark lip.

Raymond sighed and recited the instructions, sing-song. "Aim behind the shoulder. Too far forward, you break the shoulder. Too high up, you hit the lungs. Too far back, you hit the liver or gut, and they run off and bleed to death." He hunched down into the collar of his jacket. "Is that good enough for you, Jackson?"

Jackson wanted to say something to make it better, but he didn't know how. "Why is it so hard," Sheila had asked him once, "for you to talk about love?"

The cold bit at Jackson's cheeks. Whenever he glanced at Raymond, the boy turned away. And then there was a rustling noise, and a buck stepped into the clearing, a big buck, weathered, proud, with scars traced into his dark coat like wormwood. "He's yours," Jackson whispered.

Bart Galloway

In the split second that Raymond froze, the buck tensed. He had caught their scent. "Shoot, damn it," Jackson hissed, but Raymond was staring raptly at the buck.

Jackson lifted his rifle and aimed.

"No," Raymond screamed. "Don't." His hand swept out towards Jackson's arm, pushing it just as the gun discharged.

"Jesus, Raymond," Jackson yelled. The bullet smashed into the buck's hindquarters, and the animal folded, then jerked his head around in panic, pushed himself up on his broken hip, and turned tail down the mountain.

"Christ, Raymond, you dumb shit, now we have to finish him off." The buck crashed through the underbrush, and Jackson hurtled after him, ducking low-hanging branches, his heartbeat thudding in his ears. He was vaguely aware of Raymond running somewhere off to the right and a little ahead of him.

The buck thundered on, downhill, leaping through the forest, his rear folding occasionally, his left flank gleaming red. *Oh God run faster, catch the bastard, run.*

The buck was headed for the ridge, a steep drop-off studded with young trees and rotting logs just beyond a broad outgrowth of rock. If he made it to the laurel thicket, they would lose him for good, and he would die in agony. "Son of a bitch," Jackson yelled as he ran, but then he was short of breath and he stopped cursing. There seemed to be in his brain a tremendous noise as of a dam breaking, a danger unloosing, a deafening forewarning. The buck wove in and out of trees, collecting branches in his antlers like a broken crown. No time to stop and take aim. And when the buck came to the drop-off, he lurched forward for the leap over the ridge. Jackson slammed his shoulder against a tree to steady himself and aimed low, to account for the drop beyond the rocks. But the deer sailed over the ridge and the rifle's report split through the trees. At the same time, there was another crack, and Jackson heard a scream

and saw Raymond drop to his knees, a circle of blood spreading across the front of his jacket. Stunned, Jackson slowly realized that somehow his bullet had ricocheted off the rock face and hurled itself back through Raymond's chest.

He swung around and dropped his rifle as Raymond buckled. "No, no, Raymond, no!" As Jackson ran, he slipped on wet leaves and snow, and he tasted dirt in his mouth. Raymond's face was inches from his, and the boy looked at Jackson in surprise. It was what Raymond said that made the nightmare complete, that sewed up the edges of it, hemmed it like a dark suit Jackson must put on and live in ever thereafter. "What did I do wrong this time?"

> There seemed to be in his brain a tremendous noise as of a dam breaking, a danger unloosing, a deafening forewarning. The buck wove in and out of trees, collecting branches in his antlers like a broken crown.

Raymond moaned, and closed his eyes, and Jackson's own heart slammed so hard, it was as if the earth had ripped loose beneath him. Things were as they had been before, except for the terrible noise that Jackson realized was his own screaming. He held Raymond as blood welled up from the wound like a dark spring.

What did I do wrong this time?

Jackson grasped the boy under the arms and slung him over his shoulder. His knees gave away for a moment, and then his breakfast pushed up in his throat and he vomited, and Raymond's weight shifted forward. But Jackson righted himself, then gained momentum and ran through the woods, branches tearing at his face, pine needles sliding beneath his boots.

Stumbling downhill, he slid and caught himself and slid again, cradling the boy against him. Stones came loose under his boots and bounced down the mountain. "Talk to me Raymond, talk." Finally, he thudded against the front fender of the truck. He lifted Raymond into the cab, propped his wobbling head against the seat. Blood was everywhere now, both of them bloody. Raymond's head slid against the window while Jackson fumbled for his keys. He had to use both hands to finally force the key into the ignition. He looked once more at Raymond's pale face and thought yes, that he was surely dead or close to death. He floored the accelerator, and the fields rushed by him as he careened around other drivers but always returned to straddle the white line because it seemed to provide a center.

When at last the truck skidded into the emergency room driveway, Jackson told the attendants, "I shot him. I didn't mean to, but I shot him."

"Is he dead?" he asked the doctor, who felt Raymond's throat as they wheeled him away.

"There's a pulse," the man said, and the gurney disappeared behind the double doors.

Jackson signed the permission papers they gave him, but in his ears, the echo of the gun rang over and over, and he saw Raymond's stricken face and tasted dirt and smelled the bruised pine needles from the woods.

God, how could he tell Sheila? Or Lucy? Sobbing, he looked down and saw blood on his hands and on the shoulder of his jacket. People were staring.

I love you, Jackson, the boy had said. And now he might die. What would it have cost Jackson to have spoken in return?

Two hours, three, crept by, and at last the doctor appeared. "He's lost a lot of blood," he said, "but the bullet missed the vital organs. He's a lucky kid. So are you — lucky." He looked embarrassed. "There will be a police report — that's the law. Don't worry. It's an accident."

Grief spilled from Jackson's throat in big collapsing waves. The doctor laid his hands on his shoulder and gave him the number of the room where they would bring Raymond from recovery.

What did I do wrong this time?

When Jackson walked into the room, he was surprised to see sunlight spilling across the freshly made bed. Outside the clouds had receded, and the sky was a brilliant blue. Raymond should be brought up in an hour, the doctor had said. Jackson would wait *days* for Raymond, *years.* And as soon as Raymond woke up, he would tell him what he could not tell him back there in the forest.

He sank down in the bedside chair and wondered if the buck was still alive. He would be lying in the laurel thicket, eyes glazed, sunlight dappling his hide, his blood sinking into the forest floor. Jackson would never go up on the mountain again. The rifles would be buried under leaves and snow, and their barrels would rust, their stocks decay. One day, a hunter would find them and kick at the remains and wonder what had happened there.

He must have slept because the next thing he noticed was a rumbling noise, and he sat up abruptly. A gurney rattled down the hall toward the room, bringing Raymond back to him, and in his throat, words bloomed.

As the door swung open and the orderlies wheeled Raymond in, Jackson pressed against the wall to let them pass. His heart fluttered as he looked down at Raymond's pale face, at the needles and tubes in his arm. Jackson was already practicing what he would say when Raymond woke up. His lips were already moving, working at syllables, and his tongue twisted awkwardly, as if he were about to speak for the first time in a foreign language. N&T

Honorable Mentions

"Hook"
Kathryn Stripling Byer
Cullowhee, North Carolina

"The Shadow Box"
Harry Humes
Lenhartsville, Pennsylvania

Finalists

"Rolling Salvation"
and
"Sons of Ebenezer"
Jimmy Carl Harris
Birmingham, Alabama

"The Best Quilt"
Molly Thomas-Hicks
Montgomery, Alabama

"The Road to Bakersville"
Stefanie R. Whitson
Nashville, Tennessee

"Kingdom Come"
Melanie Zuercher
Hesston, Kansas

The University of Tennessee Press Second Prize

Brenda Witchger, Cary, North Carolina
Sponsor: The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville

The Double Bridges

I would die from a covered bridge collapse. Of this I was certain. What would I think about on the way down? What would I say to Mama or Daddy or my big mutton-headed brother there beside me on the seat of the truck as we all tumbled into the brown, roiling water below? It would need to be something important, but not the usual I love you and all. Something original. Something no one else would think to say.

Generally speaking, I was a cheerful child, not much given to dark thoughts, though Daddy always said I had a fanciful streak. I was content with my life on the farm and felt secure in my own little family circle, but a visit to my father's side of the big family was enough to upset my apple cart, as Grandma Euly always said. There was only one thing I feared more than an afternoon with my aunts. That was a trip to anywhere around our part of North Alabama requiring passage over one of the county's remaining covered bridges.

I was content with my life on the farm and felt secure in my own little family circle, but a visit to my father's side of the big family was enough to upset my apple cart.

On this Saturday morning, Daddy had announced that we would be visiting Aunt Mattie. This sent my bright-eyed morning mood into a spiral of fear and dread. Daddy had three sisters, all of whom would have been right at home on the wild frontier. They all hunted, fished, dipped snuff, and swore to such excess it would've made a steelworker blush. I was in awe of these women. I was also afraid of them.

And now Daddy broke the news that the reason we were going to Aunt Mattie's was that all of the aunts were there. Aunt Lulu and Aunt Opal had come up from Rock Mills, and the whole crowd was gathering at Aunt Mattie's to go fishing in her bass pond.

I was just getting my breath back when I realized that to get to Aunt Mattie's over in Blount County, we had to cross the double bridges. All the heat left my body, and a shiver shimmied up my spine.

The two wooden structures, separated by a thin wedge of land, were a waking nightmare for me. They were rickety and positioned in the cup of a valley where sunlight was a brief visitor, making them dark inside.

Mama and Daddy tried to comfort me by reminding me that I wouldn't have to cross them many more times. They were slated to be replaced soon by a modern concrete structure. In my mind, this meant that no one was bothering with the upkeep.

That morning, I made the rounds of my pets and the farm animals, issuing long, elegiac farewells. I left notes pinned to my stuffed animals, bequeathing them to friends. And I made double-sure I was wearing clean, intact underwear.

The double bridges were about halfway to Aunt Mattie's. I had mixed feelings about that locus, given my sense of fatalism. On one hand, no one wants to die a moment before his or her time, but if I died on the way there, I'd never have to worry about facing the aunts and enduring an afternoon of their pinched face scorn. But suppose we made it to Aunt Mattie's, and I spent my last hours on earth there in misery, only to have the bridge collapse on the way back. That sure didn't seem like something to wish for. It got me thinking maybe just being alive isn't really living.

I tried to concentrate on the scenery on the way over. I played "Cattle" with my big brother for a little while. He nearly always won the game because he could remember the landmarks better than me and knew where all the graveyards were. This was key to the game since passing one on your side of the road sent your herd count back to zero. But Mama always told him to be fair. We had to throw fingers — evens and odds — and let the winner pick his or her side of the road. That way, I could get lucky once in a while. Today wasn't the once-in-a-while. I was leading with 25 cows to my brother's seven when we crested a hill and my brother whooped, pointing to the little rock church on the next rise. Sure enough, there was a small graveyard behind a rusted iron gate. I lost all my cattle.

Ordinarily this would have upset me some. My brother is not what you would call a gracious winner. He bounced on the seat and pointed at me, making exaggerated pouty lips. I was calm as a stone. I had much bigger problems than him today.

I turned to stare out the window. I put all my focus on reading the signs along the roadside. "Watch for Falling Rock" didn't phase me. That was a welcome alternative to the collapsing bridge. I learned that the Shell station had sanitary bathrooms and that Watley's Dry Cleaners had free pickup and delivery, that Jesus was coming and so was a new Piggy Wiggly.

Nancy Jane Earnest

Robert Witchger

Brenda Witchger

For 17 years, Brenda Witchger was an Appalachian in exile. After meeting and marrying her husband, Bob, in Alabama, she moved in 1972 to his home state of Michigan, where they lived in Saginaw, an industrialized area that was economically depressed at the time. In Michigan, at least in Witchger's memory, it was always winter. "Up there, there's 11 months of freezing and one month of swelter — and that's it," she recounts, laughing.

This cold and barren landscape, chock-full of dying auto plants, was in marked contrast to the small, close-knit rural community of Welti, where Witchger grew up as Brenda Bonner in the Appalachian foothills of Northern Alabama. During her childhood, she was surrounded by her mother's large extended family, all of whom were born storytellers. "We used to do those things that people don't do anymore," she says. "You know, my family would get together and sit out on their porches on Sunday afternoons and tell stories. So I was always eavesdropping.

"In the North, people are always in a hurry, so you never get that relaxed atmosphere, that lazy time you need to get your story going and tell it the way you want. I think what I missed the most in Michigan was that appreciation for a story well told. If you grow up anywhere in the South, you grow up loving stories."

She discovered Southern literature as a junior high student when she checked out a volume of Eudora Welty's short stories from a bookmobile simply because the writer and her home community shared the same name. Says Witchger, "The Welti/Welty thing was a turning point for me. I think this was the first time I realized that the stories I heard around me every day could be written down — and that they had value."

Although her discovery of Welty planted the seed for her future career, it would be decades before that seed germinated. She graduated from St. Bernard's College, a small Catholic school in nearby Cullman, Ala. She then held a series of jobs, including writing for small-town papers, teaching English and journalism in an inner-city Saginaw high school, and working

I took to counting the number of tire planters filled with petunias or thrift along the way, giving myself double points for those painted white. Some folks got fancy with them and cut triangles in the rims of the tire, peeling them back to look like a crown. Folks were prone, I thought, to take beauty where they could find it.

I tried not to think of what awaited me at Aunt Mattie's, but I couldn't get it under control. The aunts didn't approve of me. I was small, thin — frail, by their estimation — and I lacked the essential ingredient necessary to win their admiration. I had no spunk. I took after my mother, who was sweet and gentle. The aunts favored rambunctious children who jumped off the roofs of pump houses, waded in the creek with their good tennis shoes on, and threw rocks in the pond, even after their parents told them to quit. They didn't like quiet girls who liked to read and draw and sit in the porch swing petting a kitten. At best I was invisible to them. At worst, they took it upon themselves to toughen me up.

My stomach tightened as we came nearer the bridges. It didn't help when we passed a roadside memorial left by some grief-stricken survivor. Plastic daisies sprang from a mason jar anchored in the red dirt at the base of a Styrofoam cross covered with crepe paper. The paper had dissolved in places, and a few tags of blue fluttered as we passed. I wondered who had died here in this blind curve and who might have felt led to make this tribute. A young bride whose husband had never returned from his night job? A father who never told his son how proud he was of him? A grandmother who missed her only granddaughter?

Grandma Euly might leave such a memorial, though she liked roses, not daisies. I tried to head off this train of thought, but I could already see the vase of roses — Grandma would never use a Mason jar — sitting near the chasm where the bridge had fallen away.

"We're almost to the bridges, half-pint," my brother said with a smirk.

"Brantley!" Mama scolded. "Behave."

She leaned over to kiss my hair. I wondered if it was the last kiss I'd ever get from Mama. It made me feel a little better to know we'd all go together — not that I wished any harm to Mama or Daddy, or even to knuckleheaded Brantley. But if it was to end this way, then I was glad it was all of us.

We rounded a curve, and the bridges loomed ahead. I couldn't for the life of me figure why anyone thought these things were beautiful or rustic or whatever it was that made people take pictures of them and put them on postcards and calendars.

The opening yawned at me like a big devouring mouth, and I swallowed hard, trying to clear the lump that had lodged in my throat. My brother began to bounce in the seat, energized by my terror.

The truck mounted the boards, and there was the rhythmic click-clack of the boards taking on, then casting off the weight of the vehicle. I tried not to look down, but it was as if some otherworldly force took over and made me peek. We'd had a considerable amount of rain of late, and Jemson's Creek was swollen. The churning water caused my heart to go on strike, refusing to do its job until I squeezed my eyes shut and thought hard of the smell of tea roses. Mama had told

> That morning, I made the rounds of my pets and the farm animals, issuing long, elegiac farewells. I left notes pinned to my stuffed animals, bequeathing them to friends. And I made double-sure I was wearing clean, intact underwear.

as a part-time English instructor at a university. Along the way, she earned a master's degree from Central Michigan University. Eventually, she moved on to dedicate all her time to raising her three children.

It was only after she and her family moved back South, this time to Cary, N.C., near Raleigh, that she began to devote herself to writing full-time. She discovered that a fiction writer had been lurking somewhere in her psyche. While helping with a local book festival, she got to know a number of people who wrote short stories and novels. "I thought, 'Oh, it looks like fun. I think I'll give it a try,' and I just absolutely fell in love with it."

Since launching herself as a fiction writer in 1997, she has enjoyed a fair measure of success. In 1998, she published her short story, "Clarity," under the pen name of Bryn Bonner in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine;* the story earned the 1999 Robert L. Fish Memorial Award, given to the best first mystery short story by a previously unpublished American author. In 2001, she won an honorable mention in *Now & Then's* Appalachian Fiction Competition. In addition, she was a semifinalist in the novel-in-progress category of the 2002 William Faulkner Creative Writing Competition and a finalist in the 2002 New Century Writer Awards, both for "Latent Image." She has also completed another novel, "Going Over Home," which she expects to place with a literary agent in the near future.

Writing fiction is quite different from the journalism she did earlier in her career. "Fiction comes so much more from somewhere inside you," she observes. Having kept a journal throughout most of her life, she often found herself wishing she could figure out how to use the insights that emerged as a result of her personal writing. "Fiction sets you free to use all that stuff writers save, little scraps of reality from here and there."

"The Double Bridges" — the story of a how a Saturday afternoon visit to her intimidating aunts results in a defining moment in a young girl's life — had its beginnings in one such little scrap of reality left over from Witchger's Alabama childhood. "We had double bridges near home, and I really did have a fear of them," she confesses. The characters were amalgams of people she had known, and she did in fact frequently go along on family fishing expeditions as a youngster, though her success was limited by the fact that she always felt terribly sorry for the fish.

The prize-winning story is basically about her realization as a teenager that it was time to become her own person. "There was nothing quite as dramatic as defying the adults in my life like the child in the story did," says Witchger, "but somewhere along the line, I had an epiphany: I didn't have to have their approval anymore." Taking such a step was no small matter for an adolescent growing up in a rural Southern community. "You know that Hillary Clinton thing: It takes a village to raise a child? That was definitely true in the community where I grew up. Everybody was constantly in your business. Growing up in that kind of community can be wonderfully supportive or it can be strangling, depending on where you are in your life, I guess."

There is, however, no question in Witchger's mind that for a writer, growing up in the South was a stroke of luck. "I think we are blessed in this area of the country to have so many good writers to serve as examples for people who are just beginning." In addition to her abiding affection for Eudora Welty, she also loves short story writer Flannery O'Connor, novelists Lee Smith and Charles Frazier, and finally, North Carolina mystery writer Margaret Maron, who has acted as a mentor.

"That's one of the intangibles about living here that people who've always lived here don't appreciate because they're just saturated with it." But that's not a mistake Witchger is likely to make, now that she is back in her home territory, surrounded again by people who love a good story, spending her days adding to the South's storehouse of tales well told.

— Jane Harris Woodside

me she thought they had the loveliest smell of any flower in the world when she had planted some on the trellis by our house two falls ago. They hadn't bloomed yet, so I figured getting to smell those roses was something to live for.

The clatter of the boards seemed to grow louder, and the sunlight fluttered like old movie film through the lattice-work on the sides of the bridge. Even through my closed lids, I could see it. We hit the asphalt, and I let out the breath I'd been holding, gasping like a drowning person. But before relief had a chance to set in, we were swallowed up by the second bridge.

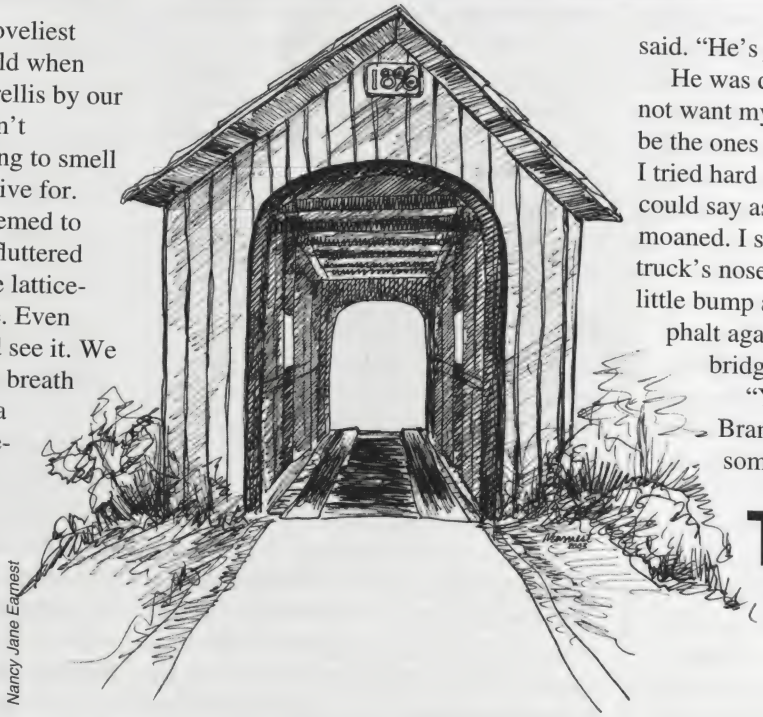
"Looky, looky," my brother urged, grabbing me around the neck and pulling my head over toward the window.

"Pay him no mind," Mama said. "He's just trying to aggravate you."

He was doing a good job. I really did not want my last words to my brother to be the ones I had on the tip of my tongue. I tried hard to think of something else I could say as the boards creaked and moaned. I sucked in my breath as the truck's nose dipped a bit, then we hit a little bump and were up and off onto asphalt again. We had cleared both bridges.

"You're a big stupid," I said to Brantley, no longer in need of something original.

The afternoon at Aunt Mattie's was much as I had anticipated it would be. The aunts all examined me upon our arrival and pronounced me "puny," then asked Daddy if I still had my



Nancy Jane Earnest

"nose in a book all the time," as if I wasn't standing right there and could hear them just fine and could've answered for myself if they'd thought to talk right to me.

We ate a big meal all together, and the aunts all laughed and poked one another as Brantley and my cousin Lester stuffed their faces and kicked at one another under the table. Aunt Mattie had fried up what looked like a small mountain of fish in her big old cooker out in the backyard. I didn't care for fish. And more than that, I was scared of missing a bone and swallowing it. I'd heard tales of people getting bones stuck in their throats and dying or having to go around like that for days until the bones dissolved.

Aunt Lulu cast a jaundiced eye in my direction. "What's wrong on your plate, child?" she asked, flicking her eyes down to my tiny pile of french fries, crisscrossed like pickup sticks alongside a dollop of ketchup and the spoonful of cole slaw I'd put way on the other side of the plate. I didn't much like my foods to touch.

Aunt Mattie had fried up what looked like a small mountain of fish in her big old cooker out in the backyard. I didn't care for fish. And more than that, I was scared of missing a bone and swallowing it.

"Nothing, ma'am," I said. "I'm fine." I knew what she was angling at but didn't want to look up. I thought maybe if I just lay low, she'd move on.

"Get you some fish on there, girl. How you ever gonna put any meat on them bones, eating like a bird? Pass your plate over here to Aunt Lulu."

I wanted to protest but couldn't. I never had it in me to even look at one of the aunts straight on, much less argue with one of them. I picked up my plate with both hands and passed it over. Aunt Lulu put two big slabs of fish right in the middle, touching the ketchup, the fries and the cole slaw. She topped it off with two big biscuits and handed it back to me. "Eat up, girlie. We're going to the pond, and you're gonna have to carry tackle."

Mama leaned over and whispered, "Just eat as much as you can. Be polite."

The fishing expedition was an activity custom-designed to highlight all my deficiencies, I decided. I was too feeble to carry the heavy tackle box Aunt Opal assigned to me, and she sighed in exasperation as she passed it off to my cousin Janice, who was a big-boned girl and well able to hold her own. Aunt Opal peered down her nose at me and snorted, handing me a rod and reel to carry.

"Think you can handle this, Little Miss?" she asked.

Aunt Lulu insisted that I put a worm on her hook, laughing as I wrenched the hapless creature, impaling him on the barbed hook. "You are such a little priss pot," she said, whipping the rod back and letting the line *sheesh* out over the pond. The poor worm came down with a brief chug, sending ripples out away from the red-and-white cork that bobbed a few times, then settled on the smooth water.

Try as I might to lay low, I could not escape the attentions of the aunts that afternoon. They sent me for tackle and chided me when I came back with the wrong sinker or hook. By mid-afternoon, I was near tears. I tried to sneak off and join my mother, who had taken a canvas sack out into the pasture to gather pods and seed casings for the wreaths she made. I had taken no more than four running steps when Aunt Mattie's call caught me.

"Sally! Come over here, girl," she

Nancy Jane Earnest

said, yanking at her line, her snuff-browned thumb pressing down hard on the line in the old rotary reel. "Got one. You come net him for me."

I cringed. I knew I'd muff this. I wasn't good at judging distances and trying to capture a wiggling fish who wanted nothing more than to thrash free and be about his fish business did nothing to increase my odds.

Aunt Mattie yelled at me as I leaned over the edge of the pond, net in hand. "Move it over, girl. Be quick. Don't you let him get away! Other way. Watch what you're doing. I swear, girl, you are no hand at this." I waited for her to begin swearing at me, which always made me go red in the face and start to sweat, but by some miracle, the fish landed in the net, and I struggled with both hands to bring it to the bank.

I stood up, proud for once to have exceeded one of the aunts' expectations. Then Aunt Mattie upped the ante. "Now take him off the hook. You need to learn how to do this."

I knelt by the squirming mass of fins and scales, looking over my shoulder, trying to will Mama to come and rescue me or Daddy to come over from the other side of the pond. No chance of salvation. All three aunts now watched as I swallowed the bile rising in my throat.

Aunt Lulu insisted that I put a worm on her hook, laughing as I wrenched the hapless creature, impaling him on the barbed hook. "You are such a little priss pot," she said, whipping the rod back and letting the line *sheesh* out over the pond.

I was afraid of the spiky fins and tried to listen as the aunts shouted directions at me.

"Get him behind the head, and push those top fins down."

"Watch that tail flapping around. Don't you lose him now."

"Grab that hook hard, girl. You got to twist it out. Don't you have no grip in them soft little hands?"

I choked back tears as I wrestled with the terrified fish, both of us a mass of liquid and fear and revulsion. His big eye stared up at me as I struggled to free the hook from his cordy lip. At last I had it free and took the fish in both hands, heading toward the five gallon bucket where they were holding the catch captive.

I cringed. I knew I'd muff this. I wasn't good at judging distances and trying to capture a wiggling fish who wanted nothing more than to thrash free and be about his fish business did nothing to increase my odds.

The fish looked at me accusingly, and I knew just how he felt. To be jerked up and held where you can't breath in an atmosphere hostile to you while others judged your size, your weight, your worth …

"Get on over here, Sally. You gonna mess around 'til you lose him. Be quick. Put some starch in that backbone."

I stopped and looked up at Aunt Mattie with her puckered face, then looked back at the terrified fish. It suddenly occurred to me that I had some choices here. I stood up as straight and tall as I could make myself and heaved the squirming fish back into the pond. He seemed to sail on the air for a long time before coming down like a blade, slicing the glassy water almost soundlessly and swimming away.

The double bridges had to be crossed on the way home, of course. I can't say I wasn't afraid. I can't say I didn't imagine the fall into the black night below, hearing the terrible crash of the truck hitting the water. But I can say this about it: I knew I could take it. "Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger," as the aunts like to say.

Aunt Mattie had just about killed me for throwing her fish back, and if the other aunts hadn't started to laugh and gotten her madder at them than at me, she might have.

It came to me then that's what I'd say on the way down. It wouldn't be what anyone would expect, but if it came to that, there wouldn't be too much time to judge it. The truck emerged from the first bridge, and the echo of the creaking boards gave way to the hum of asphalt for a brief interlude, then we went under the cover of the second. My eyes squeezed shut involuntarily, but I felt at peace inside. Yeah, that's what I'd say. *Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger.* N&T

Swallowed Story

A watermelon vine grows
out of his left ear,
lobed leaves and tendrils,
speaks green with bright yellow
flowers as stress syllables.
Its story easy, until the globes
begin to swell and
take on ominous stripes.
Spit out the seeds.

—Dory L. Hudspeth

Dory Hudspeth is a herbalist and historical researcher focusing primarily on the Shakers of South Union, Ky. She has stories and poems published in Poet Lore, Thema, Wavelength, Shenandoah, Sow's Ear Poetry Review, *and other journals. She is a member of the Kentucky Writer's Coalition and the Southern Kentucky Poetry Salon.*

At the Edge of the Past
Jenny Wiley's Story and Its Relevance Today

by Edwina Pendarvis

Will the story of Jessica Lynch's capture and rescue in Iraq take on the mythic aspects of the tale of Jenny Wiley?

Children seem to have strange ideas of fun. When my younger sister was about six years old and I was about eight, one of our favorite summertime games was stomping on bees barefoot. The idea was to kill the bee before it could sting you. I vividly recall spying a honeybee on a clover blossom, steeling myself, then stomping down quickly. I don't remember any remorse — either on moral or ecological grounds — about dispatching so many innocent bees. We also walked on hot sidewalks barefoot as long as we could stand it, pretending we were Indians walking on fiery coals. I guess it was important for us to be brave because we were so scared — at six years of age or so, the concept of death is just beginning to be understood by most children. Adult authority looms large, in both physical and emotional terms. Parents are still giants and spankings still scary. The dark bedroom at night can still terrify. Then there's the idea of life stretching out ahead, a vast, unknown future.

No wonder we displayed our backyard

Randy Snyder, Huntington (W.Va.) Herald Dispatch

Jessica Lynch waves as she rides in a motorcade in July 2003, through Elizabeth, W.Va., after her rescue from her captors in Iraq. Next to her is her brother, Greg Lynch Jr., and in front of her is her boyfriend, Rueben Contreras.

daring and played at being comic book heroes like Tarzan, Superman, or the Lone Ranger. Maybe it's *not* so strange that we acted out stories in which we could be heroes. On the whole, I think that kind of play helped us to get through a tough time, and, in a sense, that's what many stories do. Children and adults in every generation, in every culture, create and relive stories that bolster their confidence. The stories that are particularly effective in doing this become myths. Whether they are regarded as fact or fiction, they are told repeatedly, across generations.

Mythic Proportions

One of the major stories to come out of the ongoing war against Iraq was the rescue of Jessica Lynch, a young Appalachian soldier who had been captured by the Iraqis during our invasion. Her story almost immediately took on the proportions of a myth. In the midst of a controversial war, here was something on which almost everyone in the United States could agree. The pretty, open-faced youngster's picture was on millions of television screens and in newspapers. Who wouldn't be cheered to know that she was safe and coming home to the small town of Palestine, W.Va., in which she'd grown up? Not surprisingly, Lynch was in the headlines for weeks. A television show is being made out of the incident, and, with author Rick Bragg, she's writing a book about her experiences. To me, her story is interesting for its own sake and also because it reminds me of another returned captive story, one about another Appalachian woman, who lived more than two centuries ago.

Jessica Lynch's story almost immediately took on the proportions of a myth. In the midst of a controversial war, here was something on which almost everyone in the United States could agree.

Next to tales of Daniel Boone's exploits, Jenny Wiley's escape from captivity may be the most popular legend of eastern Kentucky. It has been told and re-

Rebecca's Story

As told by Edwina Pendarvis' grandmother

Twelve-year-old Rebecca lived with her parents and her twin brothers in a log cabin that sat in a small clearing along a river. Her father had built the cabin and cleared enough land for a garden, a cornfield, and a pasture for the cows and sheep. He did the farming. Her mother made all their clothes and prepared the food they ate. Rebecca and her brothers contributed to the family's survival by doing the chores they had learned how to do. Rebecca's favorite chore was spinning. She liked working with the wool her father had clipped from their sheep.

One Saturday in early autumn, her parents were going to church, and Rebecca asked if she could stay home and finish her spinning.

"No, it's too dangerous for you to stay alone. There may be Indians around," her mother answered, but Rebecca pleaded and pleaded. Finally her mother and father agreed she could stay if she would close the shutters and slide the bolt across the door. If she heard any noises outside, she was to crawl under the big iron kettle that leaned upside down against a log by the fireplace.

Rebecca's father took his gun down from the mantle, and his wife took hold of Jubal and John's hands. And they left for the little church. It would be dark before they returned.

After securing the cabin against intruders, Rebecca set to work. She felt grown-up being all alone and working the large spinning wheel. She wore an apron over her dress just like her mother did, and the apron had two big pockets in it. She stuffed the wool she took from the hickory basket into the pockets of her apron. Rebecca worked at her task until late afternoon. It had begun to get dusk when she thought she heard a noise outside. She listened. She heard nothing and went to work again. A few minutes later, she thought she heard twigs snapping, as if someone were walking around the cabin. Quickly, she crept over to the kettle and crawled under it. Her heart was racing.

Suddenly, she heard a splintering crash as an intruder burst through a window. She heard the bolt being lifted away from the door. Indians! Their moccasins made scuffing sounds as they searched the cabin. Rebecca felt sure they could hear her heart beat. As they walked close to the kettle, she held her breath. At last an Indian raised the heavy kettle, looked at Rebecca, and called to the others. They yanked Rebecca roughly from her hiding place and took her out into the night. She didn't know where they were taking her or why. They didn't hurt her, but they forced her to walk with them into the thick, dark forest. They walked all evening and into the night. There was no moon, but the Indians traveled through the dense brush with ease. When she stumbled, one of the warriors would grab her by the elbow and help her up, pushing her forward a little to hurry her as he lifted her off the ground.

She was terribly afraid. How would her father ever be able to track them on this dark night? She dropped her hands into her big apron pockets. Her fingertips touched the wool that was still there, and an idea came to her. Keeping her arm close to her body, she pulled off a wisp of wool and eased her hand out of her pocket. She dropped the wool near her feet. After traveling a short distance, she eased her hand into her pocket again, pinched off another bit of wool and dropped it beside her path. She did this for some time before one of the Indians noticed. He gave an angry cry and drew his tomahawk, but the other Indians shouted at him to stop. The Indian who seemed to be the leader took the wool out of her pockets.

Now what could she do? She feared she would never be rescued. Perhaps they would kill her when they got her deep into the forest. Weeping, tired, and lonely as she was, after awhile she thought of something else. With each step, she pushed her heels deep into the rich loam of the forest. She struck the ground hard with her heels to make a

print. She was able to do this for only a short distance though, until the same Indian drew his tomahawk a second time. Again the other Indians kept him from hurting her.

The little party finally came to a clearing. Here they tied Rebecca to a tree with deer sinews. The Indians sat down on the ground and talked a long time. Then all of them left. They went in the same direction from which they had just come. Maybe they went to rub out her heel marks. Minutes seemed to stretch into hours. Rebecca grew cold. A breeze began to blow, and she felt rain in the air as her head drooped in resignation. She'd never felt so alone. She heard the cry of a wildcat in the distance. In desperation, she bowed her head, and, tears flowing down her cheeks, she prayed for help.

Soon, lightning began to flash and thunder roared. Rain fell, first in a light sprinkle, then in a drenching downpour. As the sinews became water-soaked, Rebecca realized that the rain caused them to stretch as she strained against them. In a short time, to her amazement, the ties had loosened enough for her to pull free.

Free. But where could she go? She could see only for the fraction of a second when lightning flashed. Starting out in the direction the Indians had gone, she made slow progress, but trudged on not knowing if she would meet her captors returning to the clearing. After traveling for what seemed like hours, she came to the river, where she hid in the rushes to rest. This was the same river that ran by her home.

The sound of the rain on the leaves was softer now. Dawn was beginning to show its light in the sky. She shivered from cold and fright, straining to hear any sound that would indicate someone was near. She thought she heard voices in the distance. Scared it was the Indians, she lay quietly and listened. Soon she heard the faint voices again. They seemed to be far away and on the other side of the stream. Perhaps it was her father and some neighbor men in search of her. Or could it be the Indians returning? She wanted to call out, but was afraid to.

The voices got louder, but she still couldn't hear the words. If it were her father and the others, they would miss her if she didn't call out, but if she called out and it were the Indians, they would recapture her. She had to make a choice.

"Father," she whispered softly. No answer. She tried a second time, "Father!" No answer. She gathered all her courage and called out, "FATHER!"

To her great joy, her father answered her from across the river. They continued to call until they could see each other. Rebecca jumped into the river and swam; her father waded into the water waist-deep to meet her, picked her up, and carried her all the way home. Their neighbors walked with them in case they had more trouble with the Indians on their way back, but there was no sign of the band of warriors. They had disappeared as suddenly as they'd come.

told, passed down from one generation to the next. My mother, who grew up in Pike County, Ky., remembers begging her mother to tell over and over again the story of a young girl captured by an Indian war party. On cold, winter nights with her children gathered around her, my grandmother told the story, which she assured them was true. And even though the heroine in this story is a little girl, it has so many elements of Jenny Wiley's story that it must surely have been one of the many versions of that famous tale. The story [see sidebar] as my mother remembers it begins, "Once upon a time, in Pike County, though it wasn't called Pike County then …"

Escape Stories

This story fascinated my mother and her brothers, as stories of escapes from captivity have fascinated people for ages. In colonial times and throughout the 1800s in this country, Indian-captive tales like Jenny Wiley's story were often published in first-person narratives full of descriptions of a beautiful, wild country and the exotic tribes who peopled it. But Jenny didn't write her own narrative. William Ely wrote one of the earliest versions, which was published in 1887. He briefly sketched the events, giving the date of her capture as 1790, though the date is not certain.

According to Ely, Jenny's husband had left their cabin — in what is now Tazewell County, Va. — to hunt ginseng. While he was gone, Jenny's brother-in-law came to the cabin to warn her that there might be Indians in the vicinity. Reluctant to leave her work at the loom and thinking Indians wouldn't attack in daylight, she told him she would finish her chores and bring the children and her younger brother to stay with him and her sister later that afternoon. About 4 p.m., Indians burst in, killed all of the children except Jenny's youngest, and forced the pregnant Jenny, her toddler in her arms, to go with them. During her months-long captivity, her captors killed the child and, later, the infant she gave

> Next to tales of Daniel Boone's exploits, Jenny Wiley's escape from captivity may be the most popular legend of eastern Kentucky.

birth to. After months of captivity, Jenny escaped during a rainstorm. She walked all night and finally came to the mouth of John's Creek, to Harmon's Station, where she saw some men building a blockhouse. She called to them, and they hastily formed a raft and came across the river to get her. By the time Jenny's pursuers arrived, she was safely on the other side. Outnumbered by the settlers, the Indians went back into the forest.

A chapbook of her story, by historian Henry Skalf, was published in 1964. Harry Caudill's book *Dark Hills to Westward* was published first in 1969, by Little, Brown; then again in 1994 by the Jesse Stuart Foundation, using Caudill's subtitle, *The Saga of Jenny Wiley,* as the main title. *White Squaw* by Arville Wheeler, published in 2000, was written to appeal to young readers as well as adults. On the Internet are more versions of the story, some told by descendants of Jenny Wiley.

Since 1965, *The Legend of Jenny Wiley* has been enacted on an outdoor stage at the Jenny Wiley State Resort Park in Floyd County, Ky. She is commemorated in many other ways as well.

The Jenny Wiley Association includes many of her descendants and other people interested in her story and in eastern Kentucky history. A type of dulcimer is named after her; and a horse race at Keeneland, in Lexington, bears her name.

Other Appalachian women had similar experiences, for example, Mary Draper Ingles, whose capture and escape took place in the 1750s. Wiley has received more regional attention, though Ingles' story forms the basis for the 1981 historical novel, *Follow the River,* by James Alexander Thom. Appalachian author Mary Furbee describes Ingles' experience in *Shawnee Captive*, published in 2001.

In the stories of Appalachian women who were held captive and then escaped, the captive invariably is represented as heroic and capable of acting on her own initiative.

Myth as Allegory

Before Appalachia was settled, women in the eastern settlements were subject to capture by Indians. The earliest published story concerning a capture came out in 1682. That narrative, by Mary Rowlandson of Massachusetts, ushered in a form of frontier literature so popular that it became a major stream in American mythology. The power of these stories suggests their continued relevance; we are haunted by them, much as Nora Bonesteel in Sharyn McCrumb's *She Walks These Hills* is haunted by the ghost of Katie Wyler, who, in the novel, was taken captive by the Indians when they attacked her family's home in North Carolina.

In his book, *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes says myths tell a "true" story and yet tell it in such a way that they make the dominant values of a particular culture seem universal and natural, rather than derivative of a particular history. The myths that live a long time do so because they address deep, often unrecognized, fears and desires of many generations. Some of these feelings may be universal, such as fears about growing up, or growing old, or dying, but the form they take is cultural and can change over time and place. What Indian-captive myths meant to the Puritans differed somewhat from what they meant to settlers in Appalachia. Because of their deep religious convictions, the Puritans, according to literary critic Susan Howe, feared the marriage of English and American ways. She says that "the wilderness in subliminal and official Puritan myth stood as a microcosm for Mankind's fallen condition." John Demos, author of *The Unredeemed Captive*, says that typical events in the tales represented an allegory of spiritual progress: first, the endurance of great suffering; then fruitless attempts to escape suffering; next, the captive's acceptance of suffering and her submission of her fate to God's will; and, finally — as a consequence of this submission — her rescue and release, symbolic of her spiritual redemption.

Heroism and Superiority

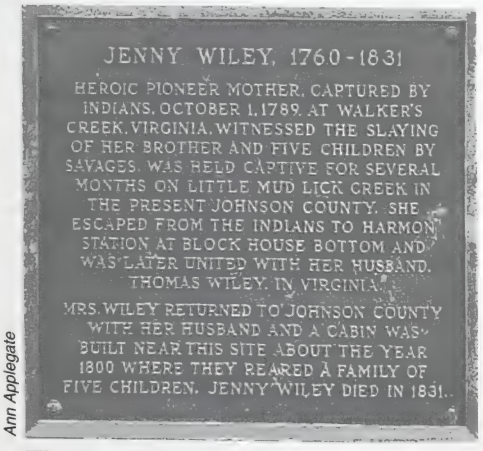
The fears and desires these myths addressed later, during the time of westward expansion, were not necessarily predominantly religious in form, though religion still played an important part in their appeal. In the stories of Appalachian women who were held captive and then escaped, the captive invariably is represented as heroic and capable of acting on her own initiative. Unlike earlier captives, who were often ransomed and rescued, the Appalachian women in popular narratives effected their own escape. This was due partly to their historical circumstances. By the mid-1700s, ransom was no longer a major reason for taking captives or a common means of rescue.

In the Appalachian stories, the captive, though scared, has the presence of mind to leave signs for possible rescuers. When the opportunity for escape arises, she is determined and courageous enough to strike out for home even though death would be the consequence if she were recaptured. At this point in our history, individual heroism in facing adversity was also being expressed through the growing mythology of the lone frontiersman, such as Daniel Boone.

Jenny is usually described as a strong, capable woman. Her ability to weave is often mentioned in her stories, as is her ability to shoot. She is represented as being used to frontier dangers and hardships. Her counterpart, Mary Ingles, is said to have walked almost a thousand miles through the wilderness to get to safety. Accounts of their trials are replete with suggestions that these women survived because they were exceptional individuals.

Unlike Puritan captives, who tended to regard captivity allegorically as a means of reprimanding and correcting their lack of faith, Appalachian captives and their storytellers often seem to have regarded the captivity as a test of bravery and resolve. These later narratives make it clear that the women survived because they belonged to a race that was superior to its adversaries. This superiority was often understood as a sign of being favored by God. One of the last of these narratives, Fanny Kelly's 1872 book, *Narrative of My Captivity Among the Sioux Indians,* depicts the Kelly family's westward journey to settle new territory as being carried out under the protective eye of God. By the time she wrote, the righteousness of white expansion across the continent had been conceived as the race's Manifest Destiny, ordained by God because whites were more deserving of the country than the Indians were.

The narratives usually accord the Indians some positive qualities, such as physical stamina and prowess; but they come up short in comparison with their captives. The Indians are presented as cowardly for attacking women and children. They are often represented as naïve and gullible, impressed by the skills of their white captive and easily fooled by her duplicities. Perhaps most importantly, the captors are described as evil. Fanny Kelly calls the Sioux who attack their


JENNY WILEY, 1760-1831
HEROIC PIONEER MOTHER. CAPTURED BY INDIANS, OCTOBER 1, 1789, AT WALKER'S CREEK, VIRGINIA. WITNESSED THE SLAYING OF HER BROTHER AND FIVE CHILDREN BY SAVAGES. WAS HELD CAPTIVE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS ON LITTLE MUD LICK CREEK IN THE PRESENT JOHNSON COUNTY. SHE ESCAPED FROM THE INDIANS TO HARMON STATION AT BLOCK HOUSE BOTTOM AND WAS LATER UNITED WITH HER HUSBAND, THOMAS WILEY, IN VIRGINIA.
MRS. WILEY RETURNED TO JOHNSON COUNTY WITH HER HUSBAND AND A CABIN WAS BUILT NEAR THIS SITE ABOUT THE YEAR 1800 WHERE THEY REARED A FAMILY OF FIVE CHILDREN. JENNY WILEY DIED IN 1831.

Ann Applegate

The inscription on the monument to Jenny Wiley in River, Ky., gives some of the history of the incident.

party "demons" and "hell-hounds." The marker at Jenny Wiley's gravesite refers to her captors as "savages."

Few of the stories include the historical circumstances that drove the Indians to such acts of cruelty. Even fewer take into account the myriad and larger cruelties imposed on these tribes by settlers, hunters, and soldiers, and perhaps especially by the entrepreneurs and government officials who were architects of the westward movement. The role of whites in bringing this trouble on themselves is left mostly unexplored.

Modern Myth in the Making

Almost all of us want to escape death, and we seek reassurance from myths in which heroes win out over seemingly impossible odds. The appeal of Jessica Lynch's story has much in common with these past stories of captive Appalachian women. Like the women in Indian-captive narratives, Lynch is portrayed as courageous and determined. Newspaper accounts of Lynch focused on the danger she was in, and some described her as being ready to fight to the death to avoid capture. Her virtue is implied by her youth and by her rural upbringing (since, in western mythology, life in the country is simpler and more innocent than city life). Her captors are presented as ruthless or, in regard to those who helped with her rescue, charmed by her. Her rescue, understood in terms of myth, made the news it did in part because it reassured us of our goodness as a people. The rescue could be understood as providential and giving credence to the war itself.

Almost all of us want to escape death, and we seek reassurance from myths in which heroes win out over seemingly impossible odds.

In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, a time when people of European descent were taking land away from the Indians who lived on it, the returned-captive mythology affirmed white superiority and the right to take that land. In this century, during a war in which the United States government has been accused (both from within the country and outside it) of unwarranted aggression, this new redeemed-captive story of a teenager returned to us served as a cohesive element. On a personal level, here is a happy ending that anyone would be glad to hear about.

Many Appalachians must have been glad, as I was, to have this Appalachian woman home safe and hailed so broadly, a credit to West Virginia and the region. But I also wondered whether some accounts of her story emphasized her strengths at the expense of providing a clear picture of her Iraqi captors. Our culture is much different now than it was in Jenny Wiley's day. We have the lessons of history and the broadened perspective that a more pluralistic culture brings to bear on what we read and hear. Today, many people believe that government policies and white people's appropriations of Indian land were responsible for the desperation and vindictiveness of some warriors and, indirectly, for the horrors suffered by their victims. As a result, whatever their position on the war on Iraq, many people may consider it important to understand our government's role in contributing to modern political and military conflict.

To respond to mass media accounts of Jessica Lynch's capture uncritically and with disregard for the humanity of the Iraqis remains tempting. People of all cultures tend to seek evidence of their superiority and rationalizations for their right to follow any course they want. We know, however, more than earlier generations did about cultural myths and the methods by which they work.

Appalachians have been accused of being a "backward" people—too little concerned with progress, of living in the past, and too much concerned with our dead. But I like to think of us as living at the edge of the past. From such a vantage, we can learn from our region's history, and use it to understand the present. Knowing Jenny Wiley's story, we can see characteristic exaggerations and omissions in some versions of Jessica Lynch's story. And surely recognizing the weaknesses in narrative patterns that reinforce a view of our culture as superior in every way to other cultures is a fitting response for citizens of a nation no longer in its infancy, and thus no longer liable to behave like a frightened child. Jenny Wiley, her Shawnee and Cherokee captors, and other "ghosts" of Appalachia have a lot to tell us. May they walk these hills for long time to come. N&T

Edwina (Eddy) Pendarvis lives in Huntington, W.Va., and teaches at Marshall University. Her poems and prose have been published in Antietam Review, Appalachian Journal, Journal of Kentucky Studies, Louisville Review, Wind, *and other journals, as well as* Now & Then.

An Appalachian Quilt

Stitch by stitch her copper hands join fabrics,
weave voiceless touch to each, a poet folding
patchwork altar call of fingers and thread.
Hers is a soul lost like a brier in the thick
folds of Appalachia. Husband, children
left behind, says patchwork is her singing,
quiet and mournful of the past that's dead,
hopeful only of losing herself again
in old Aztec patterns. Half feeling her hand,
stops and swears she felt the cold, silver bracelets
as she drew water from her grandfather's well.
Each stitch she dips deeper into her homeland,
quenching her thirst with the mountain rivulets
she's engraved in a quilt made only to sell.

— Jason Pettigrew

Jason Pettigrew lives in Knoxville where he is working on his master's degree in Spanish at the University of Tennessee.

Breaker Boy, Bootlegger, Bookworm, Bard

by Christine Goldbeck

A living treasure talks about mining coal and hard times.

When Joe Machulsky was a boy in the Appalachian Pennsylvania anthracite region, there was no such folly as television and when his hands should have been holding school books, they were separating coal from slate in a behemoth coal breaker. Machulsky is one of the last of the living breaker boys in hard coal country. That makes him a treasure.

Machulsky is sitting at the bar in the East End Field and Stream Club, the Shenandoah, Pa., club he founded, and he is ready to tell stories about working the mine when he should have been in school and about bootlegging anthracite during the Depression years. Later, perhaps after a few pints of Yuengling Lager, he may recite the poem he composed in his head one day while working at Packer Number Four of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Lost Creek.

"To break the monotony I'd make up poems while I was picking slate. Working eight hours a day on a six-inch plank would get pretty darn monotonous," he says.

Like his man-number from Maple Hill Colliery, where he went to work in 1936, he remembers this poem he titled "The Hobo." He has never written it down, but he has carried it in his head for more than 70 years. Lately, Machulsky has been composing oral poetry for his wife of 63 years, Caroline.

"Are you drinking, dearie?" At 89, he is still a big, strong man who will tip a glass every now and then. "Here, let me twist your arm," he says, giving Joe Ruth, the bartender, a smile and asking for two beers.

"You do the talking. I'll do the pouring, Grandfather," Ruth tells him. The patrons, whether in their 20s or their 50s, call him Grandfather. It is their way of showing respect for Joe. It is plain to see they revere him; and he, them.

Born March 14, 1914 to Lithuanian immigrants Joseph and Isabelle Machulsky, Joe grew up in Shenandoah, in northern Schuylkill County, and later served it as an elected official and a civic leader. He was a labor leader for the Republican Party, having traveled throughout the state on behalf of the GOP.

He was also instrumental in acquiring federal Black Lung benefits for miners who suffer from anthracosis, better known as black lung, an incurable disease of the lungs. Machulsky must take oxygen every morning. Most of his buddies who fought with him to get Black Lung benefits are now dead from the disease. What counts, he opines, is that retired and sickly miners here and in the bituminous mining regions of Pennsylvania and other mining states

Christine Goldbeck

Joe Machulsky

are able to keep a roof over their heads thanks to Black Lung benefits. "And we led the move right here," he says.

For the immigrant poor, people like Joe Machulsky and his parents, life in mine country circa the early 1900s was no treat.

Picking slate, Joe says, was every bit the tedium people read about in history books today. Until they toughened, his fingers were raw from grabbing chunks of coal and pieces of slate.

Yet, life was bearably different in many ways. He would not have traded it for all the modern comforts available today.

Hard Times

"Hard times," he says, "back when I was a kid, those were hard times. But, we made it. We all helped each other. You did things together. When we were kids, we walked all over these mountains picking huckleberries and mushrooms from the valleys. Oh, we picked apples and elderberries. We gathered on the porches of the people who had radios. There weren't too many."

After his father was paralyzed by a mining accident, Joe had to quit school to support his family. He was 16, a junior in high school, and he had a love of books and learning that continued all his life. "But my dad was terribly hurt. He was caught in a fall of coal. A big lump hit him on top of the head. He could never fully regain the use of his legs." Joe Sr. did return to the colliery, but never to underground mining. Instead, he worked as a washhouse attendant.

Picking slate, Joe says, was every bit the tedium people read about in history books today. Until they toughened, his fingers were raw from grabbing chunks of coal and pieces of slate. "We called them redtoppers. The skin was worn off the tips of your fingers. The only relief we had from them — believe it or not — we used to go out and urinate on them. It relieved the burning."

Three years later in February 1932, the Packer Number Four was closed. The coal business, he recalls, was in sad shape. With no other industry in which to work in this hard coal area, Joe became a bootlegger.

Bootlegging

Bootleg mining was illegal. It involved crimes such as trespass and theft. Nevertheless, the unemployed mine workers had families to feed and bills to pay. So, they dug their own shafts, usually on coal company property, and went to work for themselves. Bootlegging became an industry unto itself. In fact, even the priests in this predominantly Catholic area sided with the miners. They had to earn a living somehow, the clergy argued.

Journalist and novelist Louis Adamic, who wrote about immigrant experiences in the United States in the first half of the 20th century, created a picture of bootlegging during this turbulent time in his article, "The Great 'Bootleg' Coal Industry," published January 9, 1934 in *The Nation*. "They are part of one of the most interesting, not to say exciting, socio-economic phenomena developed in the United States during these years of depression — the so-called 'bootleg' coal, coal illegally mined by the unemployed in the mining towns from company-owned lands, for the most part in open daylight, by the most primitive methods imaginable, in complete disregard of private property rights and successful defiance of company police, and, in most places, with the full approval of the constituted authorities and of the overwhelming majority of the other inhabitants of the community; it is sold in the open market to the tune of nearly a half-million tons a month in competition with the legitimately mined coal — a fact which is beginning to cause anthracite operators and regular coal dealers in numerous Eastern cities and towns no end of perturbation."

Bootlegging became an industry unto itself. In fact, even the priests in this predominantly Catholic area sided with the miners. They had to earn a living somehow, the clergy argued.

Christine Goldbeck

Machulsky looks over a photo from a United Mine Workers meeting in Shamokin, Pa., in the 1950s.

Joe describes bootlegging like this: "We went and dug a hole in the mountain until we found coal. We dug it out, packed it, prepared it, and sold it. At first, we sold our coal locally to the homes in the town. Later on, people began to truck coal to the cities." He adds, "Bootlegging became a large business."

His father and a couple of friends helped with the work. In return for their sweat and toil, in return for the danger they encountered every day, they received four dollars a ton for chestnut coal and three dollars a ton for pea coal (coal is named by the size of the lumps — pea coal is smaller than chestnut coal). Their tools: a pick, a shovel, and the guts to do it.

"And some dynamite," Joe says and smiles. "We dug a shaft. Usually somewhere around 30 feet, we ran a gangway. When the coal gave out, we'd go down another 20 feet or so, run another gangway."

What Adamic wrote about the authorities being perturbed with the bootleggers

is gospel truth, according to Joe. "When we first started, the coal and iron police used to come and close our hole. … They're illegal now, the coal police, they've been outlawed, and they were tough. If they found your hole or operation, they closed it shut; they took your coal, your tools, whatever you had there. If they caught you there, they put you in jail; first maybe they'd beat you up."

He recalls that when he and his father first started working their own coalhole, they labored at night to avoid being caught. Come dawn, they would stop working and camouflage the operation with old timbers and old tree limbs. That was their life, their livelihood. They had to protect it.

One day, things came to a head between Joe and nearby coal operators. "We had an operation on the side of the road to Mahanoy City. Right below was a regular mine of the Philadelphia Reading Coal and Iron Company, Indian Ridge. We were on the hill; I was up on top hoisting coal. My dad was there cracking it. I looked down the hill for some reason or other, and who's coming up but the outside foreman from Indian Ridge and two miners. The miners had bundles of dynamite under their arms. They had rolls of fuse in their hands. They were coming up to close our hole. When they got close, my father jumped on top of the pile of coal that he had cracked. He picked up a pick, put it up by his shoulder and he said (he spoke broken English), 'You wanna close it? Come on. You wanna close it?' I jumped up beside him with an axe. They stopped. They stood there for about two minutes. Down the hill they went."

When Joe Machulsky was a boy growing up during the Depression, it was not unusual to hear a rap on the door about suppertime.

"During the depression, people looking for work had no money for transportation; they rode in boxcars, on freight trains, illegally. They'd knock on your kitchen door and offer to do chores in return for something to eat. They'd offer to carry water or chop wood or carry coal or whatever," Machulsky recalls.

Mining families had little to give, but they helped the itinerants who the media came to glamorize as "hobos." After all, it is the nature of coalcrackers to help others in need.

"They were never turned away. People took care of each other," Machulsky says. "The hobos came from all over looking for work. Some of them would come into a bar and offer to paint an appropriate scene on the back wall, especially around Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and holidays like that. They would paint them on the back bar mirrors. Every bar in town used to have their mirrors all painted up. And some of them were really good at it. Think about it — they did it for something to eat."

Machulsky's love of books and reading and his desire to mentally escape the monotony of his job as a breaker boy brought him to compose his own poems in his head. One of these was composed when he was 16 years old and picking slate at Packer Number Four of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company in Lost Creek. He calls it "The Hobo," and it is legendary among his friends at the East End Field and Stream Club in Shenandoah. Although he has never written it on paper, Machulsky has committed it to memory.

It goes like this:

Yes, boys, I am a hobo, I have traveled far and wide.
I've learned to bum my meals, boys, and from the cops to hide.
It started when I was young, boys, and I had went to school,
My tongue it used to wag, boys, and the teacher used her rule.
It was then that I left home, boys, it was then I ran away.
I took an empty boxcar, boys, and here I am today.
Sometimes I think of mother and her weary old gray head,
Oh, how I'd love to go there and on her bosom rest my head.
That is not to be, boys, for I am just a bum,
And some day in an empty boxcar, I'll pass on to kingdom come.
So saying he rose slowly and more slowly walked away.
I saw him take an old rag and brush a tear away.
The next morn I heard the news, boys, of this lad of yesterday,
All alone in an empty boxcar his soul had passed away.
And I went up to Potter's Field, boys, and I knelt on fresh turned clay,
And I said a little prayer, boys, for some mother's son had passed away.

Contract Mining

While bootlegging, he was searching for legal mining work and was eventually hired by Maple Hill Colliery. Machulsky became a mucker, which involved cleaning up rock blasted by night-shift workers who drilled and blasted to make tunnels. Machulsky says the position was "the dirtiest, filthiest job in the mine." A year later, Maple Hill hired him as a contract miner, who essentially worked to produce more coal for less money than the operator paid the regular miner.

The successful contract miner could estimate how much coal was available in his part of the mine, how hard it would be to obtain it, how fast his laborers could work, and how clean the coal would be when taken out of the mine.

As explained by coal history scholar Harold Aurand, author of *Coal Culture,* and historian Eric McKeever, author of *Tales of the Mine Country*, if the contract miner was successful, he made more than he would as a regular miner. If he was not sucessful, he lost money in the endeavor. The successful contract miner could estimate how much coal was available in his part of the mine, how hard it would be to

obtain it, how fast his laborers could work, and how clean the coal would be when taken out of the mine. A carload of coal with a lot of dirt could be rejected and not paid for, no matter who mined it. Contract mining was a gamble, but it was much more certain than bootlegging.

Fighting for What's Right

During the 1940s, Machulsky became recording secretary and later president of the Maple Hill Union, which had a membership of 1,700 men. He was also chairman of the Shenandoah General Mine Board. The Board had representation from all of the mine local unions in the area, which included about 6,000 mine workers.

He worked underground and fought for safe working conditions and fair wages. These fights extended to the garment industry, where many of coal country's women worked.

He worked underground and fought for safe working conditions and fair wages. These fights extended to the garment industry, where many of coal country's women worked. "That's right," Machulsky recalls. "They were coming in here and taking advantage of our women. We wouldn't stand for it."

Not one to retreat when the odds are high, Machulsky, a Republican, ran for Shenandoah borough council in 1949. Shenandoah is a working-class Democratic town that was controlled by "tough Irish politicians," Machulsky says. Republicans have and can win elections, but it is a fight all the way. It helped that Joe was active with the United Mine Workers. "We had a Republican majority in Shenandoah. I took office in 1950. I was elected, re-elected for my second term with the biggest majority a Republican candidate ever got in the fourth ward, but I only served two years because I was then elected County Recorder of Deeds. And I couldn't hold both offices."

In 1964, Lt. Governor Raymond P. Shafer appointed him administrator to Locust Mountain State General Hospital in Shenandoah Heights. He held this position until Pennsylvania elected a Democratic governor. As can be expected with political appointments, the new administration, elected in 1971, asked the Republican Machulsky to leave his administrative post.

Although he's been retired since, Joe has not been idle. He loves to hunt and fish with his friends from the East End Field and Stream Club. He is full of stories about these adventures, and his face lights up when his fellow sportsmen reminisce about their trips to Canada.

Things are a lot different today, here in Shenandoah, all over the world, he says. Machulsky laughs that he was born before television and indoor plumbing. He pre-dates a lot of modern technology. "When I grew up, where I grew up, we didn't even have water inside the house, not even a sink. Water was in the yard, you had to carry it in and then when you were done with it you had to carry it out. We didn't even have a sink in the house. We had one light bulb hanging, coming out, seemed like it was hanging on a rope, hanging on a cord from the ceiling. A bare light bulb — that was it. When you went upstairs to bed, you carried a, we called it a coal oil lamp, a kerosene lamp. That was it. Then you had your toilet: you had to walk out about like from here to the outside, winter or summer, it didn't matter, you had to go. In the toilet you had a Sears Roebuck catalog, not a roll of toilet paper. That's the way I grew up until I was 12 years old."

One thing that he did have back then, when this one-square-mile town was bursting at the seams with immigrant miners and their children, was books. "Oh, how I loved to read," he says. "I read everything and anything I could get my hands on. It didn't matter, as long as it was a book to learn from."

Like the books he recalls reading, Joe Machulsky is a classic, that kind of treasure that holds lessons about life in another time, if not a whole other world. N&T

Christine Goldbeck is author of A Tribute to O'Hara and Other Stories. *She is an editor at www.minecountry.com, a site dedicated to promoting and preserving the history and culture of the Appalachian Pennsylvania anthracite region. Goldbeck is studying humanities computing with a focus on digital storytelling as a graduate student at Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont. Her philosophy about this field can be found at her website, www.christinegoldbeck.com.*

The Morning After the Storm

My father's middle-aged son gets to work.
He finds a rusty saw in the tool shed
For broken poplar branches, thinking, *"Kerf —*
There's sense to match the sound you'd need
To write about sawing. Hacked and curt."
The word is like a slash he barks aloud:
"Kerf, kerf," weighing the morning's worth
Of labor against desire to write or read —

And gets to work. Much his father taught him
Returns, to his surprise. His hands adjust
To find the leverage, the sawyer's rhythm
That scores out little gouts of poplar dust.
Brightened teeth rasp "kerf," a rough hymn,
The saw waking from its dream of rust.

— James Owens

James Owens lives in Northport, Ala., and edits the Sow's Ear Poetry Review. *His poems have recently appeared in* Wind, *and* Nantahala.

ESSAY

ESL, PM, Class Code 9318

by Dana S. Wildsmith

A teacher of English to new immigrants provides her students with a powerful and precious gift.

Halloween falls on a Wednesday this year, but our class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays so I've planned a Halloween theme for Tuesday night. I teach an English-language class for adults. This term we are: six Cambodians, three Colombians, one Vietnamese, one Chinese, two Americans, four ladies from Laos, and a fluctuating number of Mexicans. Class starts at 5:30, but students get here when they can, driving to Lanier Technical College in downtown Winder, Ga., straight from work with no supper, stopping at the school's restrooms to scrub grease and ink and Sheetrock mud from their hands.

A courtly, well-educated man in his 50s, a school headmaster in his native Cambodia, Meng Thorng now handles the indignity of being set back to beginning-student status with a graciousness that always puts me in mind of Savannah or Charleston or the late Queen Mother.

Tonight it's almost seven before everyone who's coming comes. I bustle around our two rooms gathering students from their computers, their small-group work, their listening stations. I tell them: Come in here with me; we're going to work as a class for a while. I read them a horror story, not a Stephen King, but one of those elegant Victorian tales of terror, "The Thing in the Cellar." I edit madly as I read, weeding out Victorianisms, and I am well pleased when they shudder at the ending. There's nothing like a successful reading.

I say to them: Now write a few paragraphs, *dos o tres,* about what scares you. When they've finished, we read our way around the room and their phobias turn out to be about what you'd expect from a mishmash of adults. Some admit to claustrophobia ("Why that word not spelled with an 'f,' teacher?"), some are afraid of heights or spiders, but it is when Meng Thorng stands to read that things get dicier. "When I was a boy," he has written, "I was afraid of wild monkeys. Now I am a man and I am afraid to live in my own country."

I'd never own up to having favorite students, but if I were to, Meng Thorng would be a contender. A courtly, well-educated man in his 50s, a school headmaster in his native Cambodia, he now handles the indignity of being set back to beginning-student status with a graciousness that always puts me in mind of Savannah or Charleston or the late Queen Mother. Tonight he

Don Wildsmith

Meng Thorng Vuong (l), from Cambodia, and Van Trinh (r), from Vietnam, study together in Dana Wildsmith's class.

Don Wildsmith

As her students relax and chat, Dana Wildsmith (far r) watches and waits until all of them trickle into class and she can begin the lesson.

has written for us his starkest truth, and he reads it as truth, plain and bare. What, in the name of all that's noble, could I say in response but: Thank you, Meng Thorng; you read very well?

I resort to this sort of prevaricating all the time, most teachers do. I praise my students' work in lieu of praising my students. Meng Thorng would be blind-sided with embarrassment were I to commend him not on his grammatical structures, but on his bravery. Praise is what he deserves, though, in spades. The grace with which he works in a car wash and studies at second-grade level reading makes me feel lousy with privilege. And it makes me love him, in the way of teachers — which is yet another truth I'll never share with him. Instead, I do the next best thing: I give him a voice in this country, and a place to speak as he will.

Happy in Shangri-La

I have my own place in eastern Kentucky where I spend a week every June, have done so for 20 years. The second week of June is always Family Folk Week at Hindman Settlement School. It's a six-day immersion in traditional Appalachian music, dance, and crafts. I go for the singing; I go for the dancing; some years I even take a bumbling stab at pottery or basket weaving. (There is a 10-year-old half-woven honeysuckle basket leaning on a shelf near my desk. I call it a work-in-progress.) Mostly, though, I go to connect with people who think the way I think, who treasure what I treasure. All Sunday afternoon at the start of each Folk Week we hang around the main office watching for everyone's cars. We run, squeal, and hug each other hello like ex-lovers who parted as friends — we know each other that well.

My daughter has grown up at Hindman, one week per year of her life since she was 10. She says it is the only place where she pays money to be with people who have seen her at her worst and are all too willing to remind her of the details. Here she can show up for breakfast looking exactly the way one looks after jamming all night, and it's a sure thing someone will comment, but whatever they say will seem somehow only a comfy endorsement of her as one of their own.

One night at Hindman, or one almost-morning — these niggling time distinctions blur a bit by the second or third night into Folk Week — my genial professor pal Ron confided, "I want you to know how much it means to me to have these friendships with you and with Betty Lou and with Grace. In my usual life as a professional, as a husband, as a father, I can't be friends with women without it being misconstrued." He is right, though I hadn't thought of it until then, insulated as I tend to be by Hindman's air of Shangri-La. I am blindly, arrogantly happy when I am there, like some five-year-old assuming her family's life comprises the world as it should be and always will be.

Constructive Oblivion

I can't imagine my students assuming that their lives will ever be as they'd have them be. They have each been displaced: Dora, Efian, Choua, Mao, Miguel, and the rest, every resident of our Tuesday- and Thursday-night world. At 5:30, quarter of 6, I start to watch for them, counting my chicks, and they watch for each other to come through the door. Ceasr, whose history I don't know and won't ask (His face is tight from old burns and he once countered my assertion that deserts are hot with, "The desert is very, very cold at night."), most nights greets Meng Thorng with, "Heyyy, Thorngy, baby!" Not your typical way to win over a dignified Asian, but it works for them. The other night Fernando tried to help Chang understand a new word by giving it to Chang in Spanish, completely forgetting that their worlds are a hemisphere apart. And Jehovanny was so touched by the postcard I sent saying he'd been missed that he walked in his first night back waving that card like a passing grade.

The other night Fernando tried to help Chang understand a new word by giving it to Chang in Spanish, completely forgetting that their worlds are a hemisphere apart.

Don Wildsmith

Wildsmith (fifth from the l, in front row) sings with a shapenote group at Hindman's 2003 Family Folk Week.

I'll admit it sounds like I'm drifting toward fairy-tale telling. A minute ago I wrote the word "Shangri-La," and now I'm claiming my students interact like automatons in Happy Immigrant World. But it's true. They relax when they walk through that door. I've seen it happen Tuesdays and Thursdays all semester. They go to their computer stations and pick up where they left off last time as if getting back to an interrupted conversation. And this is surely not because of their great love for the English language *("Inglés es muy difícil, maestra").* It's more that they love this time, when they can forget themselves and be just any other student. What, after all, is more equalizing than the process of learning? My students become so absorbed in their study that it takes more than one pat on the shoulder to bring them around when it's time to go home. They may not have many luxuries in their lives, not even the luxury of belonging, but in this class, for six hours a week, theirs is the luxury of constructive oblivion. No wonder Meng Thorng said as he was leaving one night, "When I am in class, I am always happy."

Pat Conroy, who has spent his life famously unhappy, but who reigns as our current master at writing his way through a battlefield and coming out the other side still able to be struck humble by a sunset, has said, "The greatest teachers fill you up with hope and shower you with a thousand reasons to embrace all aspects of life." And how do they do that? It's all in the presentation. "Here's a little music for your soul," Hindman says to me. "Here's a place to be *you* as you like yourself best. Help yourself." And I say to my students: Here's what is precious to me. I'd like you to have it, too.

Teaching Hope and Hoping for Acceptance

But am I doing them a favor in the long run? For now, I notice an astounding lack of resentment toward these new immigrants, given our country's inhospitable history toward the tired, the poor, the non-English-speakers. Why are the McDaniels and

They relax when they walk through that door. I've seen it happen Tuesdays and Thursdays all semester. They go to their computer stations and pick up where they left off last time as if getting back to an interrupted conversation.

the Pentecosts and the Westmorelands of North Georgia not gathering forces to run the Garcias and the Xiongs and the Patels out of town on a rail? Maybe because we're plenty happy to let them run the 7-11s and build the I-85 extensions and plant grass at our golf courses.

What's going to happen when all that changes? What happens when I have fitted my students for competition in the more desirable arenas of our working world? Will the citizens of Tattnall County still feel warmly toward Juan when he's running for County Council? I can only keep doing what I can to keep a new bigotry from creeping into our region like mold in a basement.

This coming Monday evening, Tula will present a music program for a group at First Methodist Church. I'm the one who set it up. Tula is a talented singer and an endearing young woman. When she and her husband have eaten chicken with the Methodists, when she has sung for them and with them, when her

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hijitos have played in the Methodist nursery, will any Jones or Edwards be able to believe that Tula is less than their equal for having been born in Colombia instead of Columbus?

In my own life, words have given me power—that is why I write. Music has given me hope—that is why I go home to Hindman each year. In my classroom on Tuesday and Thursday nights, I may look like I'm teaching gerunds, but I'm teaching power; I'm teaching hope. I'm a subversive, all teachers are. When we are in class, I am always happy. N&T

Dana Wildsmith is the author of four books of poetry. She is widely published in anthologies and journals, has taught poetry workshops throughout the Southeast, and has served as writer-in-residence at Devils Tower National Monument and at The Island Institute in Sitka, Alaska. Wildsmith lives on a 150-year-old farm in Northeast Georgia and teaches English Literacy to non-English-speaking adults.

Translation

"Maestra, at work I tell my boss,
'Good morning,' and he says, 'Howzitgoan.'
Maybe I don't hear him right?" Luis,
your hearing's fine. I should tell you this:
all teachers lie. I lie. There is no
English grammar tough enough to go to
work with you. I teach etiquette
of words, their proper dress and placement
when they enter the throat's great hall—none
of which serves you well on road crew jobs
in Georgia, in August heat so hot
your boot soles melt. Your boss won't waste sweat
enunciating. But I am your teacher,
that other mother. To me,
all roads are yours to build and travel.
Whichever way you go, you'll get there,
and I intend to see to it
you have the right clothes to wear.

—Dana S. Wildsmith

High on the Highway

by Anwar F. Accawi

From old to new, straight to curved, roads, like people, can show off their personalities.

I am in love with roads. I have loved them ever since I was seven years old, when for the first time in my life I smelled the hot crackling engine of a massive black DeSoto, parked in the dusty threshing floor of my little village, Magdaluna, about a day's walk east of the old city of Sidon. That was a long time ago in Lebanon, where the roads were a nightmare, but, like primitive time machines, they carried the traveler to places ancient — Phoenician, Arabesque, and Byzantine.

I am in love with roads because they hold so much hope and promise. Their ups and downs, their shoulders and lanes, their twists and turns, like a magician's cloak, are full of surprises. Roads are my wings, spread out to the ends of the earth. I soar on them like a hawk on the wind. I sail them like a clipper ship rides the ocean waves to crimson horizons and distant lands unknown. I love roads because they keep me young and free to dream. Because of them I am glad to have been born.

Roads, I have come to realize over the years, are in many ways like people. They come in different shapes and sizes with unique dispositions and temperaments. Some roads, like those with broad shoulders, for instance, strike me as stable and strong, very much like the men and women I admire. I feel comfortable around them. I can trust them. Pellissippi Parkway in East Tennessee is like that. It inspires in me a sense of certainty and well-being. It feels *right* beneath me. When I am on it, I am like a seal in the water. I am home.

I also like wide roads, which have open, sweeping curves that gently rise and fall. They are like some women I've known — frank, spontaneous, and wholesome. They may be a little predictable but not enough to keep them from being interesting and fun to be around. They surprise me, but they do not shock me. They keep me alert without making me nervous. Highway 63E, between LaFollette and Harrogate, Tenn., makes me feel that way, especially in late October on a nippy Sunday afternoon. I like to drive it when I am feeling a little lazy. That's when the road and I move to the same beat. We dance. We do the tango.

Not all roads are good roads, however. I have known a few that are downright treacherous. Shoulderless, one-lane mountain roads in Campbell County, Tenn., fall into this category. They remind me of skinny, cave-chested, consumptive men who chew Redman tobacco in pool halls and spit in grimy Styrofoam cups held in their shaky hands. They cannot be trusted; they are fickle and mean. Route 25W between LaFollette and Jellico, Tenn., is such a highway; it is as deadly as a copperhead whose sinewy curves are constantly writhing — always changing. It strikes and kills without any warning at all. You cannot take your eyes off that road, not even for a second. I knew a man and his boy who did and they ended up dead, at the bottom of a brown river full of treadless tires, rusting refrigerators, and rotting roots.

Straight, flat roads, even those with broad shoulders, are boring, much like some married folk I've known. There is no ad-

Roads are my wings, spread out to the ends of the earth. I soar on them like a hawk on the wind. I sail them like a clipper ship rides the ocean waves to crimson horizons and distant lands unknown.

venture left in them anymore. They may be reliable, but they are dull. Interstate 26, going down to Birmingham, Ala., is such a road. I have a hard time staying awake around people and roads that are like that.

Old roads remind me of seasoned soldiers and tried combat veterans. They bear in their bodies the badges of courage — their battle scars — cracks, gashes, and holes. I see these here and there as I travel around the country. They are testimonials to the roads' fortitude, bravery, and perseverance. Sometimes when a familiar scar heals up after it has been filled with fresh asphalt, I miss it. I feel that something has been lost. It's something like giving Cyrano de Bergerac a nose job. Without that magnificent protrusion Cyrano wouldn't be Cyrano anymore. I think roads, like people, need distinguishing marks. They give them character.

I also like old roads because they are good and faithful servants. I think they should be blessed. I did bless one once. I was moved to get out of my car and lay my hands flat on I-75, just before you get to Jellico, and bless it. When I did, I swear it shuddered under my palms like a horse's skin does when a green fly lights upon it. I am not sure what really happened. Maybe it was the tractor-trailer that rumbled past.

New roads are like young people — jubilant and lively, but inexperienced and foolish. They haven't learned to settle down yet. They don't know how to relax and lie still and enjoy being enjoyed by the travelers upon them. But they catch on. In time, they become beautiful because they learn humility, like their older counterparts. They find delight in patiently serving all kinds of people without distinction, be they rich or poor, young

Nancy Fischman

Six lanes of newly completed I-26 span a valley in Western North Carolina. The road replaces a meandering two- and three-lane US-19/23 through the scenic southern Appalachian Mountains from Johnson City, Tenn., to Asheville, N.C. The bridge is equipped with special radio-controlled de-icers to combat wintry weather hazards. The major complaint from drivers is the 55 mile per hour speed limit and the belief that North Carolina has built a speed trap for unwary Tennesseans tooling along the downgrades.

Old roads remind me of seasoned soldiers and tried combat veterans. They bear in their bodies the badges of courage — their battle scars — cracks, gashes, and holes.

or old, black or white. It seems to me that roads, unlike people, are never prejudiced. It just isn't in their nature to be.

There is something about roads that has always intrigued me — that is the fact that they actually do ... nothing! They just lie there. And yet, it is amazing how much they accomplish by doing nothing. They are the arteries that carry life and hope to every corner of the earth. They are, to me, the very veins of freedom. Without them, my gypsy heart would asphyxiate.

I am 60 now, but the years have not diminished my love for roads. If anything at all, it has grown deeper and wider with time. Roads will always have a special place in my heart. In fact, I love them so much that if I could be anything I wanted to be when I grow up, or if I could come back in another form after I die, I would like to be a road in the Smoky Mountains of East Tennessee. I want to be a two-lane highway between earth and heaven. N&T

Anwar Accawi teaches in the English Language Institute at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Tent Dream

Bring your knife and your coloring book,
an old woman's voice said,

so I tried to follow. I knew
day was waiting downriver. I heard

many voices advise me along the way,
mumbling in ancient Apache

or old-country Gaelic, a shudder
of Gullah tongues parting the salt

water. Native or non-native,
sometimes we hear the same voices,

like Hopi corn chanting
my grandmother up from the dust

into one last day in her okra
patch and now suddenly everywhere

so much green, I take out my knife
and cut through to daylight.

— Kathryn Stripling Byer

Kathryn Stripling Byer has lived in Cullowhee, N.C., since 1968. She has published four books of poetry, including Wildwood Flower, *which was the 1992 Lamont Selection of the Academy of American Poets, and* Catching Light, *which received the Southeast Booksellers Award for the Best Book of Poetry in 2002. A chapbook entitled* WAKE *was published by Spring Street Editions in Sylva, N.C., April 2003.*

The Absence of an Appalachian Aesthetic

by Parks Lanier

"Beauty is its own excuse for being."
R.W. Emerson, "Rhodora"

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is the essence of the Appalachian aesthetic. For an Appalachian aesthetic to exist, it must continually be denied and negated. It must continually be defined and redefined by what it is not, rather than by what it is. Indeed, the Appalachian Aesthetic is never anything but always no-thing.

The perfect emblem of the Appalachian aesthetic is the sticker sold by those actor/musician ambassadors of Appalachia, the AppalKids of Pulaski High School in Pulaski, Va., who performed in the early 1990s. It showed a shabbily dressed, heavily bearded hillbilly in a floppy hat. He is slumped lazily against a tree trunk. Around and across him, in vivid red, is the international symbol for "NO," the red circle bisected by a red line. The AppalKids said that the symbol means "NO Stereotypes." Of course, to make the symbol, they had to draw a stereotype. To understand the symbol, everyone had to understand the stereotype of the shiftless hillbilly. If the sticker is successful and the stereotype disappears, no one will understand the message. Until that happens, the denial of the Appalachian aesthetic is the only Appalachian aesthetic there is.

Codifying and Nullifying

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is aided by ballad collectors, Jack Tale collectors, and joke collectors who, by collecting, codify and thereby nullify the oral material they handle. The notion of an "oral culture" has been an important component of the Appalachian aesthetic, but the less there is to sing or say, the more there is to document and declassify. Folklorist Richard Chase was angry that there was a storyteller named Ray Hicks loose in the hills, defying his copyright. There is no need to worry. There was only one Ray Hicks, and like the passenger pigeons he will one day be only a dim memory surviving on video and audiotape, which are erasing the Appalachian aesthetic even as they preserve it forever, or at least so long as the tapes last.

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is greatly amplified by recent Environmental Protection Agency regulations that are driving the Mom and Pop gas stations out of existence. The country store has already been driven to extinction. The checker players and storytellers retreated to the gas stations, like so

Lora Gordon/Radford University

many parrots fleeing the Amazon loggers, but now they have no place to "set a spell" and create an Appalachian aesthetic so beloved by people like Appalachian Studies advocates Loyal Jones and Bill Best. The little gas station cannot survive either. The EPA regulations about gas tanks and EPA fees have caused entrepreneurs to graft the gas station onto the country store,

Like certain domesticated plants, the dulcimer escaped into the wild, was discovered there, and has been retamed again for mass consumption by flat-land touristers (as cartoon character Snuffy Smith calls them) in both trapezoidal and teardrop shapes.

thereby creating the Quik-Stop for gas and groceries. Clerks in such places don't have so much as a stool to rest on. There are no chairs for customers, no comfortable pot-bellied stove to spit 'baccer juice on in the winter, and certainly no table for a checkerboard. If customers linger too long before the beer and cola refrigerators to swap news, they get a dirty look from the cashier. Yet, sociologists of the Appalachian aesthetic persist in describing the "personalized" atmosphere of Appalachian buying and selling. Nowadays it's grab some gas, grab a coffee, grab some gossip, and get out the door.

Bogus Traditions

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is wrapped in the notes of inauthentic instruments played by media junkies hyped on a tradition that never was. Heaven help us if there were literally hundreds and hundreds of singers/songwriters like Jean Ritchie or Paul Clayton out there. One John McCutcheon is enough.

Even the dulcimer itself, which in Blowing Rock, N.C., and Gatlinburg, Tenn., is *the* emblem of authentic Appalachian music, is suspect. Its very origins are vague. Some credit it as the imported brainchild of settlement school do-gooders. Like certain domesticated plants, it escaped into the wild, was discovered there, and has been retamed again for mass consumption by flat-land touristers (as cartoon character Snuffy Smith calls them) in both trapezoidal and teardrop shapes.

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is clearly a phenomenon of tourism. Tourists are important in defining its quintessential "otherness." It is they, for example, who make snake handling a profitable subject for print and TV journalists. It is they who keep the anthropologists digging for data on incest to satisfy Elderhostel aficionados who annoy noted storyteller and Elderhostel instructor Gary Carden with the question, "Why?"

Lora Gordon/Radford University

The desire for outsiders to know everything fuels the aesthetic as nothing else can. Writer Angus MacGregor McReady's well-funded study on Appalachian cross-dressers, for example, and the interdicting of the kilt in 18th-century Scotland, promises to be a milestone in the Appalachian aesthetic, especially if it can be linked to violation of the incest taboo. The guy/gals in the 1995 film "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" know they are in Appalachia because, they say, "we just passed a guy with no teeth." If their cross-dressing compulsions can be linked to Scots-Irish and Scots forebears who were forced to give up kilts for trews, then their aesthetic will be one with the Appalachian aesthetic. Whether they have too much gay "fashion sense" will be irrelevant.

Media and Mapping

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is guaranteed by television and movies if by nothing else. No community is too small or too poor not to have a video store. Such stores can even be set up in trailers and moved along the mountainside to safe ground if the creeks begin to rise. That's what happens in Grundy, Va., and along the road between Hindman and Hazard, Ky.

Now the T&A that are a renowned part of the alleged Appalachian aesthetic are easily seen to be part of a cultural mainstream of T&A. There is nothing special about the "t" of Li'l Abner's Daisy Mae or the "a" of the Dukes of Hazzard's Daisy Duke. Their skimpy attire, so long thought to be an essential element of the Appalachian feminine aesthetic, is now seen for what it is, or rather, for what it is not. Truly, less is more. Calling the satellite dish "the state flower of West Virginia" is just further acknowledgement of how easily one aesthetic may be transformed by another at the flick of a switch.

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is politicized by the Appalachian Regional Commission and its theoretical (some say heretical) map of "Appalachia." If people believe that Appalachia has boundaries, then they can be led to believe that its aesthetic has boundaries. This feeling is strengthened by noting that an entire state, West Virginia, lies within those boundaries. It is analogous to the French aesthetic lying within the boundaries of France, give or take Alsace-Lorraine. Or to the German aesthetic lying within the boundaries of Germany, give or take Prussia. Or to the English aesthetic lying within the boundaries of Great Britain, give or take Scotland and Wales.

These are just quibbles. One suspects that an Appalachian aesthetic in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, or any of the states that contain only fragments of Appalachia would itself be but piecemeal when compared to the aesthetic integrity of West Virginia. Only West Virginia can claim an Appalachian aesthetic as whole and entire as its sovereign boundaries.

The fact that West Virginia is just a dog-leg of Virginia broken off during the recent Unpleasant Conflict in no way challenges its claim to aesthetic authenticity. That, too, is just a quibble. In fact, the origin of West Virginia legitimizes the Appalachian aesthetic all the more, as the existence of a State of Franklin or State of Cumberland never could.

Carved Coal, Mined-Out Motifs

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is a reality not to be denied. There are countless scholars who attest to the Appalachian Utopia, and as everyone knows, Utopia comes from the Greek *u=no* plus *topos=place.* Thus it is fitting that the Appalachian "no place" have "no" aesthetic. What other kind of aesthetic could a Utopia possibly have? It is a deconstructionist's paradise.

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic makes packaging and selling it as easy as taking coal out of Kentucky. Consider, for example, the sale of miniature anthracite outhouses for $8 each in Gatlinburg, Tenn. How much can a lump of coal no bigger than the palm of your hand really be worth? Shaped into an outhouse (that makes the lump of coal "art," an aesthetic artifact), however, and duplicated by the thousands, that half-pound of coal is worth twice as much as a pound of good steak. Tourists buy it, carry it themselves in a plastic poke to their motel suitcases, lug it home over hundreds of miles, and display it at their own expense. Turning pollen into honey is not easier.

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic makes packaging and selling it as easy as taking coal out of Kentucky. Consider, for example, the sale of miniature anthracite outhouses for $8 each in Gatlinburg, Tenn. How much can a lump of coal no bigger than the palm of your hand really be worth?

The absence of an Appalachian aesthetic is devoutly to be cherished. More colleges and universities in the region should be encouraged to set up programs to study this aesthetic. These programs should be as much alike as possible. That is, they should be associated with nothing but hillbilly music, spinning wheels, quilts, dulcimers, and thigmotropic walking sticks.

They should assiduously cultivate the pastoral, Arcadian motifs even though the oxymoron, "urban Appalachian" has more philosophical potential. Quite simply, it doesn't sell well to agencies of Sponsored Programs, i.e., National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities, unless the names of James Agee or Thomas Wolfe are attached and they, sad to say, are mined out. Dr. Wilbur Ward has declared they should never have been mined to start with.

No, the educational institutions would do well to beat their benefactors into ploughshares, preferably horse-drawn ones. Living history museums attended by women in bonnets and patchwork aprons should spring up and be air-conditioned in summer to the temperature of a cool mountain spring and warmed in winter to the degree of percolating moonshine mash. Only on these terms will the Appalachian aesthetic blossom and, like 18th century English poet Thomas Gray's fabled flower "born to blush unseen," be all the more beautiful for being invisible. N&T

Parks Lanier teaches English at Radford University. This gentle satire won a Wilma Dykeman Award from the Appalachian Writers' Association.

A Who's Who and What's What Guide for Those Out of the Loop in Appalachian Studies:

• Richard Chase, editor of *The Jack Tales* and *Grandfather Tales,* forbade native North Carolina storyteller Ray Hicks to tell Jack Tales, claiming they were "his" by virtue of a copyright notice in a book.

• Loyal Jones and Bill Best of Berea College, Berea, Ky., are well-known advocates of Appalachian Studies who have written and spoken eloquently on behalf of the region.

• Jean Ritchie, Paul Clayton, and John McCutcheon are noted musicians and singers, especially of Appalachian and British ballads.

• Gary Carden of Sylva, N.C., is a noted storyteller. (See "Gary Carden: A Fish Out of Water," by Parks Lanier, *Now & Then,* Vol. 10, No. 3.)

• Angus MacGregor McReady is invented for satirical purposes.

• "To Wong Foo, … Julie Newmar" is one of the funniest movies ever made.

• Daisy Mae appeared in Al Capp's long-running comic strip "Li'l Abner," which ran daily in newspapers from 1934 to 1977. Daisy Duke is one of the Dukes of Hazzard of television fame. The Dukes of Hazzard, which ran from 1979 to 1985, received four jugs (for stereotypes), one rifle (for violence), and one coonskin cap (for macho) in the *Now & Then* Guide to Selected TV Shows About Appalachia (Vol. 8, No. 3).

• The recent Unpleasant Conflict is how many in the South refer to what is known to most Americans as the Civil War.

• Settlers in the western part of North Carolina decided to take their allegiance into their own hands and in 1784 established the State of Franklin. It lasted four years and eventually became part of the State of Tennessee. In 1987, a radio station general manager from Pennington Gap, Va., created the New State of Cumberland out of nine contiguous counties, three each from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. A governor was elected, an inaugural ball was held, and a state flag was designed.

• Dr. Wilbur Ward of Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., has suggested that James Agee, of Knoxville, Tenn., and Thomas Wolfe, of Asheville, N.C., transcend the label of "Appalachian" writers. Dr. Ward's essay on the subject appears in *Appalachia Inside Out,* Vol. 1, edited by Robert J. Higgs, Ambrose Manning, and Jim Wayne Miller, published by University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

• Thomas Gray (1716-1771) speaks of the "flower born to blush unseen" in line 55 of "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."

Creases

by Jim Minick

Two watersheds have created my life. I have mapped out the valleys and mountains of these singing waters in the folds of my grandmother's quilt and the creases in the palm of my hand. These wrinkles in the landscape, and the waters that created them, carry me home again and again.

When he moves south to the mountains of Virginia, Jim Minick uses the navigation guides he learned as a boy to find his way home again.

I am ten and riding with Grandpa on his Honda, my small body hugging his. He pulls over and tells me that he wants me to find our way home. We have just gone through the village of Mifflin, but I am too young and too far from home to know which way to go. He is firm, despite my protests, because he wants me to learn. He points to the mountains, tells me to use them. I wave my finger down one road and we take off with me clinging tightly, trying to peer over his shoulder. At each crossroad, he stops and waits for me to decide. Once I point, he drives on, not speaking, just grinning at my confusion. I direct him through the maze of country roads, seeking familiar traces besides Three Square Hollow, the landmark of this Pennsylvania valley, but I find none. I can tell we are heading in the southerly direction of home, yet I can't comprehend where we'll arrive. Finally, I see Potato Point School, an abandoned one-room building where Uncle Wilmer used to teach—I know where I am. We make a last turn, heading toward Newburg and away from the mountain, and I look back at the hollow one last time. I pinch Grandpa's gut; he just chuckles and opens the throttle.

At each crossroad, Grandpa stops and waits for me to decide. Once I point, he drives on, not speaking, just grinning at my confusion.

Using mountains and rivers as maps is a family trait I inherited from my father and his parents. "Always use the sun," they admonished, as they modeled a way of seeing the world defined not by a grid of roads, but by the hump of ridges and curve of creeks. If I became lost in the valley, they taught me to look to the mountains, and if in the mountains, to follow a stream until I found help. Always, though, directions related to a base, to where I came from, to the three-foot wide Red Run where we caught crawfish, to the Conodoguinet with its rippling bends we floated, to our hay fields blanketed in snow, to home.

From Newburg, where I grew up, Blue Mountain angles to the north and west, and South Mountain, farther away across the valley, works its way to the south and east. The waters coming off both mountains flow into the Susquehanna River, 40 miles away. On the more familiar Blue Mountain, the main landmark is Three Square Hollow, a point where three mountains come together, where springs pour out of rocky banks. From a distance, the place looks like a "V" with a mountain behind, like a tongue of river between two rocks. I always know where I am if I can find this hollow.

Another memory. Every Sunday afternoon, my grandparents point their 1969 Buick north towards Three Square Hollow, toting me in the back seat and several empty jugs in the trunk. We want that mountain spring water. I ride on top of one of Grandma's quilts and trace her stitches, marking our turns on these narrow roads. We drive eight miles of hardtop and another mile on dirt road into the hollow where the road turns sharply up the mountain.

On this particular day, we drive past the springs in the deep part of the hollow and travel up the steep, washboarded road. Near the top, we stop at the lookout and view the whole valley. I have been here often, but this time with Grandpa's help, I

finally see Newburg. He draws a map of the valley on the palm of his hand and then points to different landmarks in the valley below. He also points to a line of trees that snakes through farmland. "The Conodoguinet," he claims. Though I can't see water, I trust him and scan this line again and again. I imagine the sections I can't see, the pool where my best friend, Joe, and I tipped his canoe, the covered bridge we always glide under, the wood ducks we startle into flight. From the lookout, the creek becomes a capillary, the river a vein, and I see a map of the world in the palm of my grandfather's hand.

Before we leave, I find my hometown one last time. A buzzard flies low over the trees, then rides the current up and over the mountain. We drive back to the springs to fill jugs and bellies, coming away with water, sweet and cold, dripping from our chins.

Years later, I move away from Three Square Hollow to marry Sarah and buy a hundred-year-old farmhouse in Floyd County, Va. Grandma and Grandpa are dead, and now as I settle into this new place, my directions become jumbled, a torn map I can't piece together. I slowly learn my way around the back roads, but I still don't know my directions because I don't know the mountains and streams. I hear Grandpa asking me, "Where are you, boy? Get your bearings," but I can't respond. Finally, after about a month of wandering, I discover Buffalo Mountain, a 4000-foot, humped-back peak, a petrified buffalo grazing on a patchwork of farmland. I pull off the road, search the county map, and discover where I am in relation to the mountain. The map shows that this landmark lies about 15 miles south, a direction I thought was north. The map inside my head folds itself shut, turns itself around 180 degrees, and opens back up, the accordion creases smoothing out in a new determination to learn these directions and this place. In my head, Grandpa just chuckles at my confusion. From this point on, though, when I can find the Buffalo's hump racing westward, I know where I am.

But when I can't see Buffalo, I still get lost, still don't know the waterways. On a topographical map, I find our home on Lost Bent Creek. A mile northwest, Lost Bent empties into the Little River. My finger traces the many curves of the Little River to where it joins the New River, a larger and even more circuitous river than the Little. I dig out larger maps to follow the New as it becomes the Kanawha, the Ohio, the Mississippi, and finally, the Gulf of Mexico.

Sarah Minick

Jim Minick picks blueberries from the Floyd County certified organic, pick-your-own blueberry farm he and his wife, Sarah, created and operated for five years.

The spring of our first year in Floyd County, Sarah and I hike up the spine of the Buffalo. Our feet stumble over the rocky vertebrae of the mountain as we scale two miles and 1,500 feet to the top of the eastern side. We follow an old road, an easy grade, until the last quarter mile when it looks impossibly steep for even a mule. Sweating, we scramble over rock to a flat knoll, the top of the Buffalo's head. We skirt the remains of a fire tower, walking gingerly on shale outcrops surrounded by stunted oak, mountain ash, and striped maple. In the April afternoon, we wish for heavier jackets and tuck ourselves under a ledge, the wind chilling our sweaty bodies.

On the western cliff, I crawl out to the edge, hold tight to the gritty outcrop, and watch a rock disappear into a thicket hundreds of feet below. The tulip poplars' new leaves green the lower slopes the same shade as the lichen by my wrist. Distant ponds become mercury in the bright light, and a vulture tilts into a northern gust. When I slide back, shaley flecks of the mountain stick to my palms, glint in the sun.

A high pressure system scours the sky of all clouds, gives us a 60-mile view. With help from the sun and a map, the latter a poor substitute for a grandfather, I look for landmarks, search for bearings. To the south, I find Pilot Mountain, two hours away in North Carolina, its knob once used by Indians as they navigated without maps. To the southwest stands Mount Rogers, the highest peak in Virginia. Closer in, directly west, Macks Mountain bulges, the New and Little Rivers rubbing its opposite flanks. To the north, Brush Mountain ends abruptly where the New River cuts through; and, closer north, Will's Ridge rests a mile from our new home.

We spend the rest of the afternoon on Buffalo, tasting winter still on the north wind, and watching the season's last juncos feed for their flight to summer nests in Canada. On our hike home, we flush a turkey that clears the trees and then glides down the mountain's spine. For a moment, I ride on its warm back, float above treetops, sail into the sky, and then land in a cove a mile away. The turkey disappears and I'm grounded again, hiking home.

From space, the Susquehanna watershed of my childhood looks like a tree so large its roots reach into the depths of the Atlantic Ocean, its distant limbs trailing out hundreds of miles north into the mountains of New York.

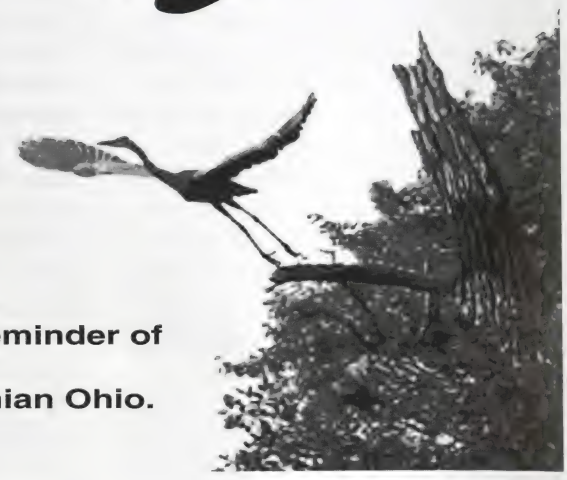
From space, the New River watershed, as it connects on and on to greater rivers, looks like a sunflower, the Gulf of Mexico its bloom, the rivers forming its long curving stem.

We live at the flower's roots. N&T

Jim Minick now lives in Wythe County, Va., where he farms, writes, and teaches at Radford University. His work has appeared in or is forthcoming in many publications, including The Encyclopedia of Appalachia, *and, of course,* Now & Then. *He writes a monthly nature/gardening column for* The Roanoke Times New River Current *and his op-ed pieces for Blue Ridge Press have been picked up by major newspapers in Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.*

Where Herons Fly

by Cathy Lentes



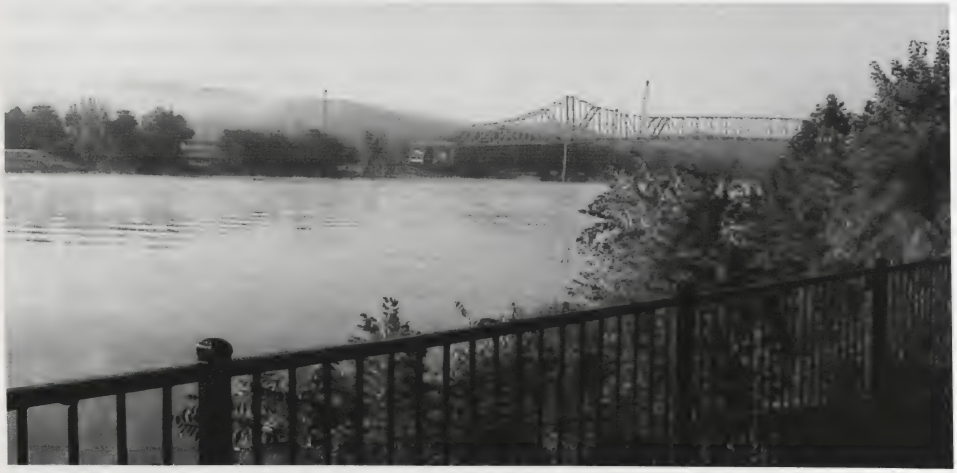
Scott Monson

The sight of an ancient, mysterious bird is a reminder of why the author chooses to remain in Appalachian Ohio.

As you round the curve heading west out of Rutland, Ohio, the view opens dramatically. Cows and horses graze in green pastures stretching along the creek and low hills. Small groups of trees rise above barns and fences and then meld into dense woods. In the distance, the cooling towers of a power plant spill slow-motion clouds at the edge of the Ohio River.

Early fall offers tawny fields of wheat, corn, and soybeans, and hillsides ablaze in reds, golds, and browns. The air is crisp and clear with light reminiscent of days spent in England. After the trees lose their leaves, a stark beauty rises. Bare rock cliffs unseen for three seasons glow in the afternoon sun. Winter, if we're lucky, brings snow to the landscape, or if we're not so lucky, cold misty rain clouds lying low. The first warm days of spring burst with redbud. Dogwoods blossom soon after, and then the unbelievable green of first leaves. In all seasons, this view refreshes and calms me and, in fact, was the selling point on the November evening we first went to see our future, and current, home.

I am not a native of Appalachia, though after 16 years in residence, I have lived here almost as long as in my flatland, childhood home. Should I leave this place, I would miss certain people and customs, like the brief nod or wave exchanged between friends and strangers alike when passing each other on a country road, or the sure knowledge that neighbors will be there when flood strikes, when the cows escape, or the power goes out and it's 20 below. Most of all, I would miss the land itself and the life it supports. In the big city, the only bears my daughter would see reside in a zoo, yet here she has seen two black bears stroll through her own property. As for me, I'll take a traffic jam of 20 turkeys any day over bumper-to-bumper rush hour, blaring horns and sirens, and stressed-out drivers permanently attached to their cell phones and desperately in need of a cappuccino.



Cathy Lentes

The Pomeroy-Mason Bridge crosses over the Ohio River to West Virginia.

Often as I venture down the gravel lane on which I live, curving through the rich farm fields of my neighbors, I will see a blue heron rise awk-

wardly out of Leading Creek, gawky legs dangling under slate-colored wings. The sight never fails to take my breath away. The herons nest each year in a massive sycamore along the bank of the creek. In the winter their enormous nests stand in striking contrast to the sky and white-green bark of the tree. In the spring, my children

I'll take a traffic jam of 20 turkeys any day over bumper-to-bumper rush hour, blaring horns and sirens, and stressed-out drivers.

and I keep track of which nests have birds sitting on them, anticipating eggs, and young herons visiting our farm pond when they gain their wings, perching on the branches of the walnut trees, looking suspiciously like small pelicans rather than the majestic blue ballerinas of adulthood.

I like living in a place where herons fly, where they are safe enough and have room enough to build a home. A blue heron's spread wings can match an eagle's, yet they are delicate, lightweight birds, ancient, mysterious, and exotic. Nearly extinct a century ago, their plumage was more likely seen atop a fancy lady's hat than gracing our waterways. Their survival is a proud success for both birds and conservationists. Like many Appalachians, they have a solitary, self-sufficient nature, but also know when to stick together. Whether standing stork-like in the shallows patiently fishing or hovering protectively over nestlings in the rookery, herons seem like a storybook creation, wondrous in their absurdity, quick to ignite the imagination.

Once when my son was younger, yet old enough to know better, he saw a great blue heron surge up off the neighbor's small pond, its massive wings caught in silhouette against a deep purple-red-orange sunset. "Pterodactyl!" he called out, pointing, and meant it with all his heart. In that brief moment of wonder, he believed. Now, as a big city college student he returns home with new eyes and ears for this green world he has left behind. Worn down by noise and smelly exhaust, lights that never dim enough to see the stars, he tells me he finally understands why we moved to Appalachian Ohio all those years ago. "It's a good place to grow up." And I agree wholeheartedly.

Just now, as I write these words, I can hear six new puppies whimpering for their mother a few steps away from me on the front porch. All morning only three vehicles have driven past the house, one of them the mail truck. If I walk out the kitchen door, I can pick a dozen fresh red tomatoes, or count dragonflies darting over the pond. If I want to, I can saddle the horse and ride into the hills and not see

Whether standing stork-like in the shallows patiently fishing or hovering protectively over nestlings in the rookery, herons seem like a storybook creation, wondrous in their absurdity, quick to ignite the imagination.

a single soul for hours. Or I can settle in the yard with a glass of iced tea and wait for Mars to entrance me in the southeast sky. The point is, all of this is possible.

Sometimes as I watch the evening news, discouraged by the heartbreak and hostility in the world, I wish I could gather all the sad and lonely people, all the angry troublemakers, all the soul-sick searchers, and take them one by one to the bridge at dusk to watch a great blue heron standing Zen-like in the shallows. I don't believe anyone who truly stops to view these creatures or manages to connect to the natural world in some way can live their life unchanged. For me, these beautiful birds become a symbol of hope for the region, the country, the world. As long as there are places that refresh us, and life that is worth protecting, we can go on. This is the promise of Appalachia and other places that are still wild at heart.

I am grateful to live here, to have raised my children here, not in a perfect place perhaps, but in a place where peace can be found standing still and steady in muddy waters, and a holy wonder can take wing within you at any moment. N&T

Morgan Lentes

Cathy Lentes takes a break with puppies Paulette and Billy.

In addition to Now & Then, *Cathy Lentes' poems and essays appear in a variety of books, magazines, and journals. She was recently selected as one of 10 poets to read at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and her work was featured during Ohio's Literary Homecoming in September, 2003, as part of the state's Bicentennial celebration.*

ESSAY

The Valley of the Green Bird

by Dot Jackson

What new changes can the inhabitants of a small South Carolina valley expect now?

Leaning on the shiny midnight-blue hearse in the shade of a dogwood tree, a mourner gets a revelation: do not die on Big Eastatoee Creek in the season of black gnats.

The funeral tent spills over with family; when a tribe has set fast in a valley for two centuries, everybody's kin. The shaded tombstones are all occupied. The less fortunate perch on marble copings, fanning, swatting, swiping at their eyes, their church clothes damp in the August sun.

The eulogy is warm and lighthearted. Death has come gently to a fine old man. He had lived long enough, studied enough, and thought enough, while at his end of the crosscut saw and at the plow behind his mule; he had raised younguns enough, and had seen enough sorrow that he knew what it is to truly love one's neighbor. He was 92.

Someone remembers that the old man never let a person leave his porch without an apple for the journey, a bunch of turnips or a cabbage for the pot.

"He was born in these mountains and he loved them all his life," the young preacher intones. He begins a story about the time the Deceased tried to cook a pot of mush while his wife was gone to town. But a convoy of gravel trucks groans and sputters down the road, and the tale is lost midway. The prayer is lost to a helicopter swooping low. The hearse-leaners speculate that it is a rich guy headed for the golf course just beyond a spit of the lake, across the road. We wonder which "celebrity," this time. Those who give a rat's posterior will watch the evening news.

Dot Jackson

Eastatoee Falls on Reedy Cove Creek is a much-visited spot in the Eastatoee Valley.

When the Departed was a young man, everybody farmed in Eastatoee Valley, the Valley of the Green Bird. It is told down the generations that there is one family that never made likker. This is the family with the deep, loamy bottoms along miles of Big Eastatoee, where corn grew deep glossy green and 10 feet tall. Up on the rocky hillsides it grew scraggly and poor, and in the dark coves only the stills and laurels thrived. A family with fine corn crops did not need to make anything else.

In that time, the Keowee River—swift, mountain-cold and green—defined the valley's west end and served as a freight carrier. Kegs of whiskey could be rafted down to the Savannah and unloaded in the river towns for distribution.

Whatever the local industry, this little church was full on Sundays; then, there were more sitting in the pews than are lying beneath the churchyard on this day. A big crowd. But—things happened.

The most telling: money became an object. A garden, a woodlot, and a milk cow could sustain a family in remarkable comfort but could not pay rising taxes.

Could not buy the kinds of clothes that kids saw and wanted after the school buses came in to take them to town. Could not send anyone to college as tuition rose, or put in plumbing, or pay for utilities they'd never known they needed until the world came in. Government intruded. Whiskey became seriously risky, as one patriarch after another was carted off to Alabama to learn "new skills" at the federal "pen." (Asked where he learned to cook so well, one elder, presiding over a church supper, laughingly responded, "Down at Talladegy!")

Dot Jackson

Paul (now deceased) and Mildred Bowie rock on the porch in the valley where Bowies have rocked for over 100 years.

So the exodus began. It was not a new thing, really, but just a moment in the cycle in this Northwestern South Carolina valley. In the way of the seasons, nothing is ever quite still, even here where "timelessness" enthralls the passerby.

When the white traders found this valley in the mid-1700s, Indians still hunted buffalo in Appalachian meadows, and wolves crooned at night. In the twilight, flocks of green birds clouded the sky, circling their roosts. Carolina parakeets were small, bright-colored parrots. They were good eating, good hat-dressing, or good target-practice, and, as their Central American near double, the monk parakeet, is known to be today, they were probably destructively fond of orchard fruits and cultivated grains.

The birds' haunts across the Southern hills gave name to native villages: Estatoe, Eastatoe, Eastatoee. Natives didn't spell it, so any way has seemed to do. They all mean the same thing, legendarily: the green bird. And, legendarily, in this tiny, seven-mile-long, mountain-bound vein of lush plant life, watered by its glittering clear stream, the green bird made its pitiful last stand.

Here also the Lower Nation of the Cherokee held out to its end in South Carolina. Treaties and burnouts and massacres routed native peoples earlier; the last official exodus from their lands across the Keowee River came in 1817. But many had intermarried with white people and held deeds to land. Others just dug in their heels and would not go until federal orders sent soldiers to remove the holdouts in the 1830s. Those who could not prove ownership or white relationships were sent on the Trail of Tears, leaving everything — their pots, their tools, their ancestral bones.

Behind them, the whites moved into an idyllic place. Farm houses and barns replaced lodges; cotton replaced pumpkin fields; loggers stripped the mountainsides bare. Sometimes nature got fed up. A logging railroad had been in place only months, in 1928, when a small stream rose in rain-fed fury and twisted the rails into hairpins and corkscrews, at the top of what is now the area's most scenic waterfall. The "sculptures" are still there, 75 years later, for the hardy and history-obsessed to find.

When economics added to the ruin, all but the toughest and most determined took their leave. It was just too far to any town for a commute. The woods returned. A major land buyer was the power company, with its timbering subsidiary. But for a quirk never fully explained, the Eastatoee Valley might have been flooded in the 1960s dam-building frenzy. "We thought it was going to happen," says Mildred Bowie, whose family has been here forever, and intends yet to stay. "We thought they would take it, and we'd just have to go up into North Carolina, but they didn't. We never did know why."

Across the Keowee, Eastatoee's twin valley of Jocassee went under 400 feet of water; the threat of eminent domain cleared that population. The road that used to join the valleys dips now into the lake, its yellow line still visible, crisscrossed by schools of little fishes.

When it was done, when deep water lapped at riprap where the river used to sing, there was quiet. And then, after 30 years, when the power company decided to divest itself of land it had no use for, developers, not locals, were the first to know. Stakes went up on building lots priced at hundreds of times what the pre-lake owners had gotten per acre. Million-dollar houses rose like mushrooms after rain. Taxes began a rise that took the locals' breath away, along with their savings.

And the churchyard where we stand today became a battleground. The developer petitioned the state for ownership of the public road through his project, citing his need for a gate to protect his buyers from the rest of us, and got it. Though he promised access to the church, many locals did not believe that would last. A group appealed the road closure in court, and that is where the matter stands.

The light is dying early, as it always does in mountains close as these. Food is waiting at the brush arbor. Under the tent, the service is winding up with a banjo tune. Not something sad or conventionally spiritual — no. It is a coon-chase song, wild and twangy, running fast and free. The old man loved his dogs.

The cycle of extinction is moving once again in the Valley of the Green Bird, as it does in nature, in folkways, and in institutions that we love. But there is a mood among the people. This time it will not win without a fight. N&T

Dot Jackson is a long-time reporter who has been honored to see her work appear over many years in Now & Then. *She lives happily in the hills of Pickens Co., S.C.*

Last Respects

Nancy Jane Earnest

by Fred Chappell

Mid-August and even in the blue-hazed mountains the heat was oppressive along the river. The river was down, gray rocks showing a reddish skirt-hem below the accustomed water level. Less river-roil: The Upper Mills glided along in an oily hush and the trout were not stirring. Mr. Cole found that his reliable willow-leaf lure held no fascination for speckle, rainbow, brook, or brown; and so he stood in the middle of the bridge, staring down at the puny stream and consoling the four o'clock doldrums with a hand-rolled Prince Albert. He'd stashed his gear in his truck.

Those who knew him never called him by any other name than Mr. Cole. He was indeterminately old, weathered, sharp-eyed, wearing faded bib overalls and a red bandanna loose about his scraggly neck. Those who didn't know him were likely to be tourists; they addressed him as "sir" or "hey mister" or even as "old-timer." He didn't care what the loud flatlanders called him, holding each and every one — and especially Floridians — in casual contempt as ignoramuses.

Today had provided plentiful opportunity to exercise his attitude. The fish were so stubbornly covert that those who had come to take them were reduced to the expedient of trying to make conversation in order to give the lassitude some slight interest.

He was woefully tired of being asked: "Hey mister, have you caught anything?" "Say, fellow, how's the fishing going?" "Getting any strikes, old-timer?" So now when a fresh-faced youngster of about 12 with an unplaceable accent requested an account of his current piscatorial dossier, Mr. Cole rested his weary eyes upon the feckless young chap and replied, "Pretty good, I guess. Caught 23 about an hour ago."

"Twenty-three! Can I see them?"

The kid's pale countenance and zealous manner suggested that he must have been incarcerated in a room with a television set for most of his green years. Shame and disgrace, how younguns these days behaved toward their elders.

"You might see 13 of them if you inspect the river real close."

"Did you throw them back in?"

"Can't keep but only 10." His voice was stern. "That's the law of the land."

"Oh yeah." The boy's face showed disappointment. It would be a trove, 23 fish all together. "Can I see the 10?"

"What for?"

"I haven't caught any. I just want to see what they look like."

"All right, but you'll have to dig them up."

"What do you mean?"

Mr. Cole sighed mournfully. "They died. I had to bury them."

"You buried your fish, mister? That sounds weird."

"Said a few words over them and set up a stone and laid them to rest in peace."

"Where?"

He dropped his frayed cigarette butt into the road dust and crushed it with his ragged, damp basketball shoe. "Up that way." He raised his head, indicating with the crown of his beat-up old fedora the mountain slope on the right-hand side.

"Can I go see their grave?"

"Nothing to see. I didn't have nothing to carve their names with. So it's just a white flint rock."

"Their names?"

A portly man approached from the left-hand side. His attire was predictable: expensive red plaid shirt, waist-high waders, a dinky hat verminous with dry flies, a briar pipe tucked stem-first into his shirt pocket. He carried a heavy tackle box and an unfamiliar style of fly rod.

"Jackson, Maude, Perkin, Malkin, Welkin, Kraken, Slow John, Quicksilver, Ketchup, and Hashbrown."

"Excuse me?" said the man.

"Those are names, Dad," the kid said.

"Names?"

"The names of the fish he caught and buried."

The florid-faced man gave Mr. Cole a suspicious once-over. "Fish you buried?"

"They died," Mr. Cole explained with calm patience.

"I never heard of that — burying the fish you catch," the man said. "Why would you do something like that old-timer?"

Mr. Cole heaved a long, long sigh. "They died," he said tiredly. "Ain't you got no respect for them's that passed?"

The flatlander looked at him for a longish moment, as if weighing a thousand mortal possibilities. "I suppose you must have had a burial service — out of respect."

"Just a Bible verse," Mr. Cole said. "They was only fish and I think two of them was Republicans."

"Which Bible verse did you repeat?"

The boy looked at both of them in puzzled awe. His mouth gaped like a sprung mousetrap.

"Ananias, chapter 13, verse 41," said Mr. Cole. "'Let them as has any business of their own be mindful unto it.'"

"This is the Pisgah National Forest," the man said. "I think it's against the law to bury on federal property."

"I don't care nothing about no law." Mr. Cole declared.

The man put his hand on his son's shoulder, as if to reassure. The boy looked up at his father in delight. "Well, I ran into a game warden in the road back there and he's coming this way. What if I were to tell him what you've done?"

"I don't like game wardens," Mr. Cole said. "He bothers me and I'll cut his gizzard out. I bet a big ole brown would leap on it."

"Here's your chance to find out," said Sir Florida.

The game warden was a solidly built man of about 50 years. He showed a fringe of orange hair under his Smoky and was freckled plentifully. He approached casually but took stock of the three males in two swift glances. "Hello, boys," he said.

"Officer," said the flatlander, "I'd like to report a crime. This old man has been burying trout on federal property."

"That right?" said the warden. "How do you know?"

"He confessed. I heard him say so."

"Any witnesses?"

"My boy Osbert here heard him too."

Osbert, thought Mr. Cole. That's what's wrong with this kid.

"Well sir, is this fellow telling the truth?"

"You ever know a tourist to tell the truth?"

The flatlander almost grinned. "He also said he'd cut out your gizzard."

The warden's face became as serious as a blackboard full of calculus. "Did you say that?" He rested his hand on the butt of his holstered pistol.

"I don't care much for game wardens," Mr. Cole admitted.

"How about those fish? Did you bury them on Forest land?"

Mr. Cole's tone was that of the weariest and most forgiving of saints. "They died."

"Well, I'm afraid you're going to have to come along with me."

"Don't much care to," Mr. Cole said.

"It's not up to you," the warden said and unsnapped the pistol guard and slid the big weapon out of its holster. He pointed it at Mr. Cole's red bandanna. "You don't want to tangle with this .45."

"All right, but it ain't fair. I was only just paying my respects."

The warden motioned. "This way over to my car. And I'm going to need to see your fishing license."

"It's in my truck."

"Yeah. They all say that … Let's go."

They were almost to the end of the bridge when the warden turned and said in an official tone of voice: "Let that be a lesson to you, young fellow. Don't you ever be burying fish on federal property. This gentleman is going to need a mighty good lawyer."

"I don't much care for lawyers," Mr. Cole said as they marched into the road and turned left behind a line of dusty laurels.

"I don't either," said the warden. He slipped the pistol back into his holster and snapped the guard.

"How is Virginia getting along?" Mr. Cole asked.

"A lot better. The doc says she can be up and around in maybe a week. … You want a lift to your truck?"

"Since all I'm going to get today is the exercise, I'll just hike it."

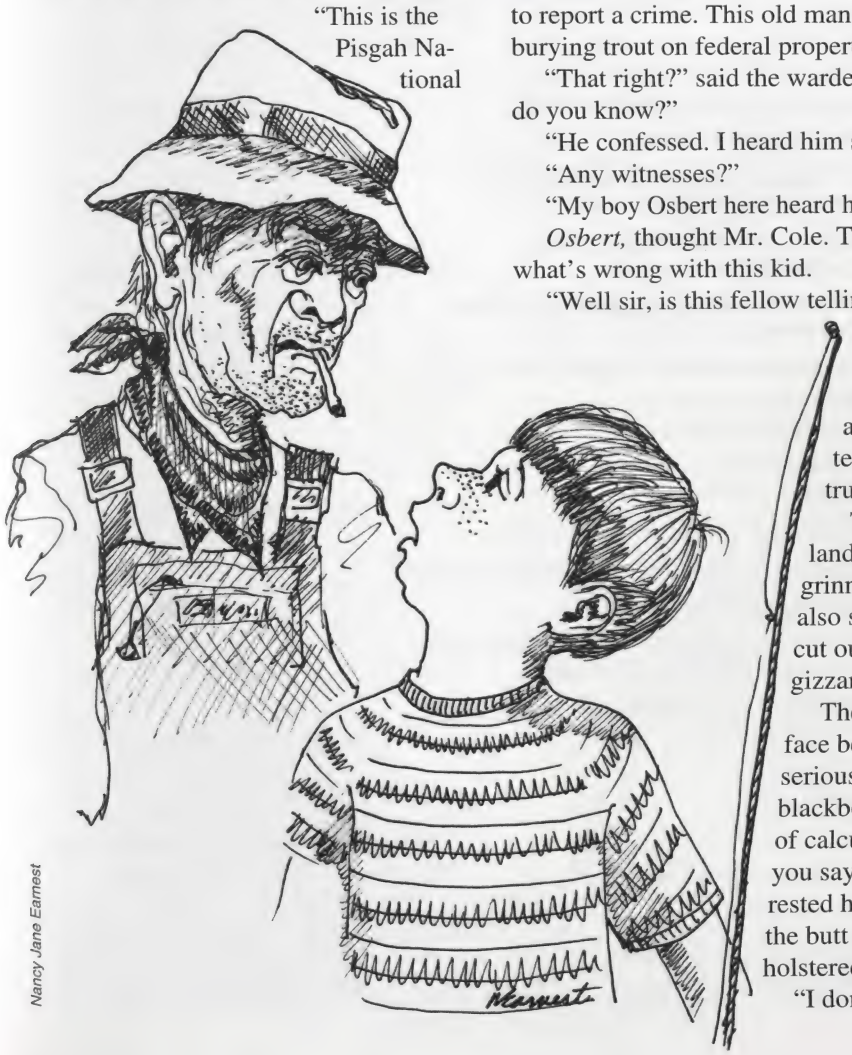
"Okay," said the warden. "Watch out for flatlanders. They're taking the curves slower than ever."

Mr. Cole paused and lifted his hat and palmed sweat from his forehead. "Say, Jimbo," he said, "next time, can I point the pistol?"

"Well, I don't know," the warden said. "Let me consider. … When do you think the fish will start biting?"

Mr. Cole studied the sun and the hill-studded horizon. "6:17," he said. N&T

A prize-winning poet and author, Fred Chappell lives and teaches in Greensboro, N.C.



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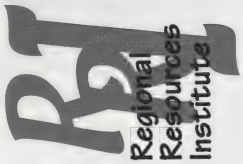

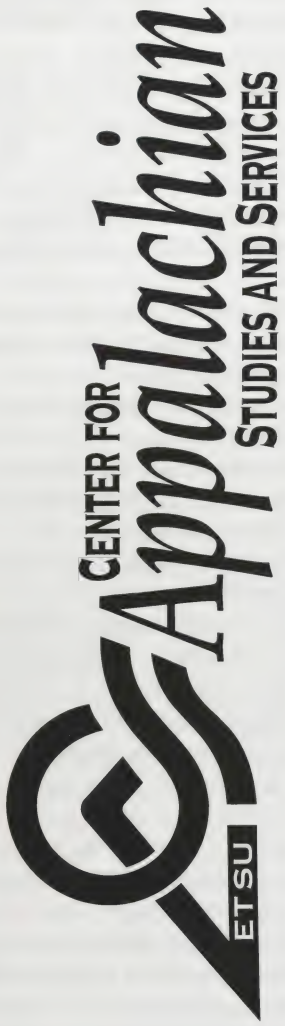

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services: Celebrating 20 Years

I knew that on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, a regional university had to have as its mission to understand the region it served and to provide academic programs, courses, and events that made understanding that region a vital part of the institution's culture.

—Arthur DeRosier

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A CASS Retrospective

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

by Ted Olson

In December 2001, Jean Haskell stepped down as director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University, and I was asked to step in as interim director. During my two years in that temporary post, I had the opportunity to work with many talented people in completing or advancing several major projects begun during Haskell's tenure, including the Appalachian Regional Commission-sponsored Appalachian Teaching Project, the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival's "Appalachia: Heritage and Harmony" exhibition, and the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. I also helped to administer a new ETSU/CASS initiative: the Kellogg Foundation-supported Veteran's History Project and the associated Appalachian Studies Minor's Documentary Studies Concentration. All the while, I continued my ongoing responsibilities of teaching courses, coordinating the Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies program, and conducting my own Appalachian Studies-related research.

Needless to say, it was a very busy two years, and I deeply appreciate the support of all those who helped me as I endeavored to serve CASS, ETSU, the Tri-Cities community, and the wider Appalachian region and its people. CASS accomplished many things during that two-year period, and it was truly because of a team effort. One example of this was the collective willingness of CASS faculty and staff to embark upon a "visioning" process to identify possible future directions for our organization. The process was long and tiring for all concerned, involving many meetings, yet it produced much reflection on the Center's past accomplishments as well as many good ideas for possible future implementation.

As it happened, my stint as interim director of the Center coincided with an extremely challenging period for our organization. While we saw some significant achievements for CASS during this time (some of which are discussed in the following articles), the years 2002-2003 also brought unforeseen difficulties — some the normal result of a temporary, transitional leadership situation, others stemming from a reduction in the Center's operating budget brought on by Tennessee's statewide cuts in funding for higher education. Budget reductions for fiscal year 2003-2004 were particularly severe, forcing ETSU officials and CASS program heads to make tough decisions as to the Center's priorities. Because our organization had entered that fiscal year with very little room to spare within its budget, the reductions in various operating budgets, mandated to begin July 2003, were bound to cause considerable change in the Center's usual operations.

The collective decision of the ETSU and CASS officials involved in trying to resolve this predicament was to try to safeguard the Center's academic programs and units. Sadly, the new, reduced budget structure necessitated downsizing by three staff positions. All three people holding those positions were longtime CASS employees who had made vital and lasting contributions to our organization and to the Appalachian region. Since one of the lost positions was the editor's position for *Now & Then*, the future of this magazine is currently under review. Folks who would vote for a continuation of *Now & Then* — and there are many people who would greatly appreciate its survival — should keep in mind that, over the past several years, CASS was spending nearly $100 for every $25 brought back to CASS through memberships and sales of the magazine. Regardless of its future, *Now & Then* has had a wholly positive impact on Appalachia, having contributed immeasurably to the cultural life of the region.

With the aforementioned budget reductions and resulting organizational changes, and in recognition of the fact that 2004 marks the 20th anniversaries of both CASS and *Now & Then*, it made sense, in this double issue of *Now & Then*, to recall the Center's history and to acknowledge its impact. Toward that goal,

three of us here at CASS — Nancy Fischman, Ned Irwin, and I — compiled the following special retrospective section. We contacted a number of people associated with the Center in the past and/or presently, and we asked them to share the story of their involvement with our organization. We were particularly interested in people's reflections on the importance of CASS to their lives. Some of the respondents concentrated on the Center's contributions to the interdisciplinary field of Appalachian Studies, while others suggested possible future directions. We hope that you'll join us in celebrating past and recent achievements of CASS and *Now & Then*. And we hope that you'll journey with us into the future, as we continue to study and to serve the Appalachian region in ways both old and new.

Ted Olson will remain with CASS as director of the Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies program. He is also editor of CrossRoads: A Southern Culture Annual, *which publishes analytical academic essays, oral histories, memoirs, creative writing, artwork, and photography that tell about the South.*

ETSU and Appalachia: A Regional Partnership

by Arthur H. DeRosier Jr.

On July 1, 1967, I became the graduate school dean at East Tennessee State University, and I must confess that I knew very little about the entire Appalachian region. I did, however, know a thing or two about regional universities. I knew that on both the undergraduate and graduate levels, a regional university had to have as its mission to understand the region it served and to provide academic programs, courses, and events that made understanding that region a vital part of the institution's culture. I vowed to learn about Appalachia and to work with academic colleagues in providing graduate options for students—i.e., regional literature and history, environmental studies, and health-care academic programs—that would educate professionals dedicated to improving life in Appalachia.

ETSU University Relations, courtesy of University Archives

President Art DeRosier throws out the first pitch to open the ETSU Buccaneers' baseball season in the late 1970s.

To that end, I studied Appalachian culture, listened to stories and songs about the region, and worked with ETSU President D.P. Culp in fulfilling his dream for a medical school dedicated to serving the region. One day he called me into his office and asked me to drive to Boone, N.C., to meet with scholars and administrators from three Appalachian North Carolina institutions, Appalachian State University (ASU), Mars Hill College, and Western Carolina University, trying to create what they called the Appalachian Consortium. They wanted ETSU as a partner. I remember driving to Boone, meeting Cratis Williams, dean of the graduate school at ASU, Mars Hill history professor Harley Jolley, ASU president emeritus Bill Plemmons, and others, and being thrilled by the prospect of helping launch such an ambitious regional effort to awaken Americans to the strengths and shortcomings of one of the more misunderstood and neglected regions in America. I vowed that if ever the opportunity presented itself, I would like to be part of another group that might create an Appalachian institute for ETSU—an institute dedicated to the effort of trying to solve some of the Appalachian region's overlooked problems.

Years later, when I returned to ETSU as its president in 1977, I remembered that desire to make a difference, and I chose as my inaugural theme the honoring of Southern Appalachia and its rich heritage. All inaugural events were regional in nature, and I let it be known that the creation of an ETSU institute committed to gathering, publishing, celebrating, and storing the rich heritage of the history and culture of the region we served was a major goal of mine.

Loyal friends and supporters stepped forward to help turn my dream into a reality; they contributed significant sums to the project, and the Institute for Appalachian Affairs was born on my inauguration day in April 1978. The mission of the institute was simple: to serve the diverse needs of an American region too long ignored. We would think beyond the classroom and try to preserve the region's cultural richness while talking about and working on economic problems and health concerns. All the while we would try to convince everyone in the region that Appalachia was second to no other region in a nation known for its diversity and multiple regional contributions.

I still consider the awakening to regional potential—from volumes published on heretofore neglected subjects to a medical school and a regional institute trumpeting change—the crowning accomplishments of my years as graduate dean, vice president, and president at ETSU. The success of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services has exceeded my dreams, and I pray support will always be forthcoming to continue labors yet unfinished.

Arthur DeRosier was president of ETSU during 1977-1980. He is president emeritus of Rocky Mountain College and senior fellow of the Western Heritage Center, both in Billings, Mont.

What Next?

by Richard Blaustein

You don't have to be Appalachian to appreciate the history and traditions of Appalachia. Born and raised in the urban backcountry of Brooklyn, N.Y., I began playing old-time Appalachian banjo at the age of 15 and took up the fiddle two years later. In 1967, I entered the doctoral program in folklore at Indiana University. During the three years my wife, Rosemary, and I spent in Southern Indiana, I got to know and play music with migrants from Appalachia who found work in the local factories and quarries.

When I came to East Tennessee State University in the fall of 1970, I found active interest in Appalachian Studies among leading scholars, including folklorists Thomas G. Burton and Ambrose Manning and regional literature specialist Robert J. "Jack" Higgs. Their work laid the foundations for the Institute for Appalachian Affairs (IAA) in 1978. Linda Preston Scott served as the first director of the IAA, succeeded by Jay Reece. In 1983, I became director of the IAA and in the following year I was named director of ETSU's first Center of Excellence, the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services.

Since 1984 the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services has published *Now & Then* magazine. Funding for the magazine comes from the State of Tennessee's Centers of Excellence program. Publishing a multi-disciplinary magazine devoted to Appalachian regional themes has been one of the Center's main objectives since its inception. *Now & Then* began in an era of optimistic expansion, but the budgetary situation now is much more uncertain and problematic than it was 20 years ago. This could well be the last edition of *Now & Then,* at least in its present form.

It is hard to contemplate the demise of a project into which I put so much time and energy during my stint as the Center's first director. But the sad economic truth is that CASS can no longer afford to underwrite this magazine at a time when the entire state university system is "bleeding from a thousand cuts." Everyone involved in publishing this magazine in the past and present can take pride in having helped CASS fulfill one of its primary goals, making a major sustained contribution to the literature of the Appalachian Studies movement. I hope that CASS can reinvent *Now & Then* and continue to publish it in a more economical form, perhaps as an annual or an occasional journal, which would put a different spin on the phrase "Now & Then."

I would hate to see *Now & Then* disappear altogether, and I hope that longtime readers and subscribers will see fit to give CASS their financial support to ensure the continuity of the magazine and the Center's other major projects. The Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program attracts students from all across the United States and several foreign countries. The Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies program has encouraged scholarly interchange between ETSU and the University of Edinburgh. The Governor's School for Tennessee Heritage brings together gifted high school students and master teachers to explore the state's history and heritage. The undergraduate minor in Appalachian Studies continues to draw students concerned with better understanding their native region. Interest in Appalachian Studies at ETSU continues to be strong despite the state's financial woes.

Personally, I would like to see CASS develop an undergraduate minor in folklore, expand its working relationships with Scottish and Irish universities, and develop an endowment to carry on its projects without worrying about the vagaries of state funding. As long as we're dreaming, we might as well dream big; and sometimes dreams do actually come true. We need your support and advice to help CASS weather these difficult times and keep Appalachian Studies thriving at our university, one of the best regional universities in the United States.

Pat Arnow

Richard Blaustein talks with the Center's first visiting scholar, Janine Bensasson (c), who was doing graduate work in American Studies at the University of Paris in 1985. With them is Helen Roseberry, then director of the Reece Museum. Pat Arnow wrote an article about Bensasson in *Now & Then,* Vol. 2, No. 1-2.

Richard Blaustein played a key role in the development of the proposal for the formation of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services under the Tennessee Centers of Excellence program and became the Center's first director. Blaustein is a professor in ETSU's department of sociology and anthropology. He teaches classes on folklore and Appalachian studies, and plays an active role in the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program.

Making a Difference

by Patricia Beaver

"How many of us are there ... who have made secret pledges to ourselves that ... we will work in large or small ways ... for as long as we draw breath, to make some small difference in what is known about this place and improving life for the people of this place."

—John Stephenson, on the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services' early commitment to Appalachia, quoted by Jean Haskell in *NewsCASS,* Spring-Summer 1995, the Center's newsletter.

Since 1979, when I was appointed director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., I have enjoyed a fruitful relationship with those who have led the development of Appalachian Studies at East Tennessee State University. From lively telephone and lunch conversations with Linda Scott, through journeys with Richard Blaustein, collaborations with Jean Haskell, and recent work with Ted Olson, I have appreciated the leadership, the collegiality, and the strength of purpose that the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services has brought to the Appalachian Studies movement.

ETSU folk have been involved in the Appalachian Studies Association (ASA) from its first conference in 1978. ETSU hosted the annual ASA conference in 1980 with a theme of "Appalachia/ America." More than 300 Appalachian scholars attended this first of several ASA conferences to be held in Johnson City.

The Center shared responsibility with the Appalachian Consortium (a confederation of 16 regional universities, colleges, and other institutions) for publishing several volumes of the Proceedings of the ASA. CASS also hosted the ASA conferences in 1987 and 1993 and assumed management of the ASA offices from 1992 through 1994. CASS has served the region by developing the historical collections of the Reece Museum, the document-rich Archives of Appalachia, and the popular magazine *Now & Then.*

Under the leadership of its directors, capable staff, and Appalachian Studies faculty, CASS has developed unique programs in Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies and in Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music, and has taken the lead in creating the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia.* CASS has fostered connections among ETSU scholars and others around the region who are committed to the best practices in the documentation, interpretation, and analysis of myriad regional themes, and to promoting the health and well-being of our communities.

When the Center's former director Jean Haskell followed Ron Eller, associate professor of history at the University of Kentucky, as Whisman Appalachian Scholar with the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), she coordinated a new form of cooperation among Appalachian Studies centers in the region. At Eller's urging, in July 1999, the ARC hosted a meeting of Appalachian Studies center directors to discuss ways that the centers could have a more effective voice in the work of the ARC. In subsequent meetings in Johnson City and Boone, the directors agreed to try an innovative collaboration. Rather than compete for limited resources, they would collaborate on a grant, with all participants teaching a college or university course focused on the question "How do we build a sustainable future for Appalachian communities?" Haskell took the lead in developing the proposal for ARC, while CASS provided the staffing to realize the resulting collaborative Appalachian Teaching Project (ATP). The successful and innovative ATP, now in its third year, annually involves more than 100 students and 15 or so faculty from diverse Appalachian institutions of higher education.

As we look to the stark challenges of the 21st century, including tightening institutional budgets, new forms of impoverishment of Appalachian peoples in response to globalization and war, and new forms of development and resource exploitation which threaten communities and ecologies, we hope that John Stephenson's early observations about CASS will hold true for all of us, that we "will work in large or small ways" to make a difference in the scholarship about the region and the quality of life in Appalachia.

Patricia D. Beaver is director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C.

Enduring and Prevailing at CASS

by Jack Higgs

The first budget crisis I remember was in 1939 when I was in the second grade at a country school where enrollment was rarely over 15. One day the teacher said that in both the boys' and girls' toilets we were using too much toilet paper, that she was sure some of the students were carrying paper home, that toilet paper was public property, and if the excessive use of it didn't stop there would be changes we wouldn't like. After all these years my deskmate swears I turned to him and whispered, "What she gonna do? Make us use our first two fingers?" I can't remember exactly what happened on the paper crisis, but we all endured. We didn't exactly prevail since about six years later the school closed—not because of lack of toilet paper but because of lack of students.

The challenge to the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is not to endure, but, amid all the setbacks and losses, to prevail. There is a line by Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the famous French general commanding allied forces in World War I, that, though probably apocryphal, well illustrates the spirit of mission impossible: "My center is giving way, my right is in retreat. Situation excellent. I shall attack."

The Center has been delivered a severe blow by recent budget reductions, but some way has to be imagined, in spite of added handicaps, not only to carry on the good and useful work of the past, not

ETSU University Relations, courtesy of University Archives

English professor Jack Higgs makes a point during a lecture.

just to "make do," but to add to previous accomplishments in creative ways. In *War and Peace,* Tolstoy speaks of the factor MX in war where M is the symbol of material and personnel and X is the spirit of determination. If X is lowered when the M goes down, then failure in any endeavor is inevitable.

The justification of CASS is inarguably contained in one line from the Temple of Delphi: "Know Thyself." This idea with relation to region is magnificently echoed in the book *Mystery and Manners* by Flannery O'Connor, which I highly recommend for everyone involved in Appalachian Studies, especially writers.

Specifically, regarding a plan of "attack," here are some programs that I would consider renewing and/or expanding:

1. An interdepartmental summer film workshop (including TV) to study, among other themes, the phenomenon of stereotypes in Appalachia. For a number of years, these workshops were among the most popular programs ever offered at ETSU. It is not inconceivable that there could evolve under CASS a World Institute for the Study of Ethnic and Cultural Stereotypes that would attract funding and students, and would contribute to peace and understanding. In any event, I recommend that CASS give more attention, whenever possible, to a study of comparative cultures, a reaching out as much as a looking back.

2. We need to do more in the realm of literary criticism, including the role and history of stock and flat characters in Appalachian literature.

3. I know from serving on the editorial board of the Appalachian Consortium for 10 years that there are excellent novels out there. Hence, I recommend the establishment of a novel contest every two years to be named after Wilma Dykeman.

4. Finally, and most importantly, there has to be assertive leadership at every level and in every position in relation to departments and central administration. All such people should have absolute confidence in the academic and cultural goals of the Center. This is no criticism of the current or past leadership at any post. It is simply another way of saying that licking wounds from recent cuts is not the answer for enduring and certainly not the answer for prevailing.

It may be that none of these programs can be implemented, but for any of them to have a chance, or for any others to be seriously considered, a great deal of imagination will be required, as well as perseverance, confidence, and enthusiasm — without which, as Emerson says, nothing great was ever accomplished.

Robert J. (Jack) Higgs is professor emeritus of English at East Tennessee State University.

A Life-Changing Decade

by Jean Haskell

I never knew how short and life-changing a decade could be until I retired in 2003 after spending nearly 10 years as director of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. A decade of hard work with good colleagues and friends. A decade of successes and stumbles. A decade of shared joys and sorrows. When I came to CASS from Virginia Tech in 1993, I had two long-term goals: to strengthen the Center's internal organization and sense of identity and to make the Center's work have even more impact and visibility regionally, nationally, and internationally. I also believed the admonition that "leaders don't force people to follow—they invite them on a journey."

CASS in 1993 had programs, personnel, and budgets administered by several departments and programs across the university. In many ways, I was asked to be director of a Center "that did not hold" (to paraphrase W.B. Yeats) within this bureaucratic tangle. We spent a great deal of time consolidating parts of CASS into one administrative unit and one group of people trying to set and work toward common goals and mutual support. Our combined strength across the Archives of Appalachia, the Reece Museum, and the Regional Resources Institute (the latter hosting *Now & Then* magazine as well as the Appalachian Studies curriculum; the Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies program; the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program; the *Encyclopedia*

ETSU University Relations

Making the Center a cohesive unit and involving the Center in many projects called for Jean Haskell to spend many hours on the telephone. Haskell sits at her desk in the old CASS offices in the basement of the old Sherrod Library. CASS moved into new "temporary" offices early in 1999 in Warf-Pickell Hall, which houses the College of Education at ETSU. The plan was to move back to the old library building after renovations. Funding cuts on the state level have put that project on hold.

of Appalachia; and the Governor's School for Tennessee Heritage) gave us more ways to serve a wider range of Appalachian constituents and more appeal to funding agencies and professional partners. While this organiztional work wasn't glamorous—in fact, it mostly meant endless meetings, discussions, negotiations, and documents—the results empowered us. As I used to tell CASS staff, my job as director was to keep obstacles off the sidewalk so others could skate. And skate they did, quite brilliantly.

I used to tell CASS staff, my job as director was to keep obstacles off the sidewalk so others could skate. And skate they did, quite brilliantly.

The other goal—to give the Center's work more impact and visibility—took many forms, including the growth of the Archives of Appalachia; national accreditation of the Reece Museum; the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* project; increased work with the University of Edinburgh, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Smithsonian Institution; and international recognition of the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program through the International Bluegrass Music Association, recording projects, and performances in Japan, France, and at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. We were especially eager to increase work in our local communities through such avenues as the Hidden Heroines oral history project (see *Now & Then,* Vol. 13, No. 1) that focused on the lives of everyday women, the Kellogg Community Partnership project that fostered university-community collaboration to solve local problems, and the National Civic League's All-America City competition.

A chance to participate in the bid to win the 1999 All-America City designation for the Tri-Cities of Johnson City and Kingsport, Tenn., and Bristol, Tenn.-Va., gave CASS a wonderful opportunity to serve local communities who supported the Center and the university. The Tri-Cities area was selected as one of 30 finalists to compete for the 10 All-America City awards based on the Center's research and application preparation. The Center then played a key role in developing, scripting, and staging the formal presentation each finalist group had to make to judges in Philadelphia. The Tri-Cities' presentation stressed regional cooperation and outstanding regional programs in health care, youth development, and Appalachian cultural heritage in storytelling and music. Center staff joined a delegation of over 60 persons from all over the Tri-Cities region (two states, 14 counties, and over 100 municipalities) that traveled to Philadelphia to give the presentation. We won. And not only did we win, but the Tri-Cities earned the distinction of being the first All-America *Region* in the country. We all felt our emphasis on regionalism and our shared Appalachian heritage won the day. Winning with our neighbors gave those of us in CASS a deep feeling of satisfaction, tremendous pride, and sense of purpose.

Many of the projects undertaken by the Center in the last 10 years, such as the All-America City competition, the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia,* and the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival's Appalachian program, have been projects of considerable breadth and significance that demanded regional collaboration on a grand scale, synthesis of all we purport to know about the Appalachian region, and use of all our skills as academics and professionals in Appalachian Studies. They are projects that have brought Appalachia to the attention of the nation and the world. As I look back on introducing performances on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, and telling people from around the world about the region and showing them its finest traditional talent, and as I behold the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* in the final stages with its richness of information and expertise, I feel such projects are fitting culminations to a career in which I was lucky enough to share my passion for the mountains and people of Appalachia. It has been a fascinating journey.

Jean Haskell lives with her husband, Fred Shoenfeld, in Portsmouth, Va. Although retired as director of CASS, she still serves as co-editor of the Encyclopedia of Appalachia.

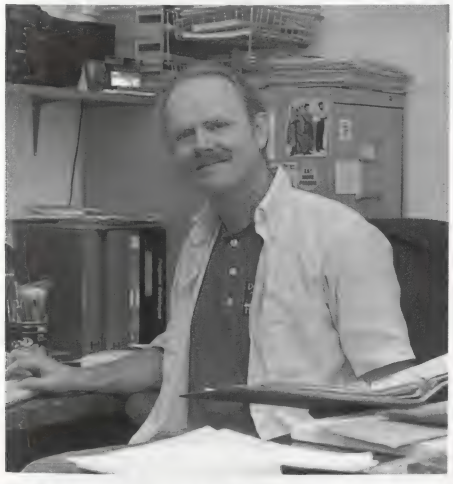
Fellowships and Research Experiences

Local Radio Producer Goes National with the Help of CASS

by Phil Leonard

The early 1980s was an exciting time to be involved with public radio. National Public Radio had just launched the world's first radio satellite distribution system. Previously, a single telephone line fed national programs from Washington, D.C., to local stations around the nation. The relatively narrow frequency response and monaural signal limited such programs to news and information "talk" shows. Stereo music programs were still disseminated via large 10-inch reels of tape mailed from one station to the next. The new satellite system allowed up to eight mono or four stereo programs to be distributed to all stations simultaneously for either live or tape-delayed broadcast. This sudden availability of a large distribution conduit created a need for programming to fill the available satellite channels. NPR and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, seeing this as an opportunity to bring local radio producers and their shows into the national spotlight, created the Satellite Program Development Fund (SPDF).

The SPDF offered competitive grant awards to producers across the United States to develop program ideas or convert local programs into radio shows that could be offered to all public radio stations that possessed satellite receiving dishes. In the spring of 1983, I was awarded a SPDF grant in the amount of $14,900. I was to produce and make available to other public radio stations a total of 13 one-hour stereo programs of music recorded live in performance. I already had been producing a weekly local show from the Down Home Picking Parlor, a well-respected music venue in Johnson City, Tenn. "Saturday Jubilee" was broadcast over WETS-FM, the local NPR affiliate on the East Tennessee State University campus. Now, I could attempt to move up to national distribution.



ETSU Photo Lab

Phil Leonard works at his desk at WETS-FM in 1994.

Public radio is often considered "community radio." If ever there was a community effort, the radio series "Down Home Music" was such an example. My co-producer, Jim Boswell, owner of a sound reinforcement company, brought to this project not only his expertise as an audio engineer but also his wealth of audio equipment. Jim contributed all the equipment used for the project, and he worked for pennies on the dollar as co-producer. The Down Home offered a storeroom to serve as both office and production space. Members of the East Tennessee Musicians Cooperative converted that storeroom's crude interior into a full-blown recording studio. Local print artist Tom Salin developed a beautiful promotion package, and he acquired free printing of the package from a local print shop.

Even with all the in-kind contributions, Jim and I felt we could barely squeak out 13 hour-long music programs within the allowed budget. What we hadn't counted on was the generosity of the musicians. Because so many waived their performance fees, our final expenses were under budget by more than $5,000. NPR asked us to produce more programs rather than return the funds. Because radio stations usually commit program time slots on a quarterly basis, we decided to offer another 13 weeks of programs.

We had an impressive track record with our first series (carried by more than 80 stations around the country), but we wanted to make sure we were fully funded before offering our continued services to the public radio family. Because we had represented Upper East Tennessee to radio listeners from Florida to Alaska, and the series had garnered attention through international stories and pictures distributed by the Associated Press, the Tennessee Department of Tourism recognized a good thing and awarded us a $5,000 grant.

We were so close to having all the funds we needed, but not close enough. We could produce the shows but had no money to rent satellite time for distribution. To our rescue came the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. Director Richard Blaustein had already displayed a desire to take CASS into the community through various grant awards and collaborative efforts with regional writers, musicians, folk medicine practioners, and scholars. I was encouraged to apply for a Center fellowship. In September 1984, I was awarded a fellowship in the amount of $3,338.

In terms of today's economy, that small amount might help a radio production group pay a couple of months of telephone bills or Internet access fees. In 1984, it allowed two local radio producers to offer a second series of 13 one-hour music programs to a national audience. In 1985, "Down Home Music II" was carried by more than 140 radio stations. Again, listeners from Alaska to Florida and from Maine to California could listen to regional musicians from East Tennessee plying their craft. And, this time, each show ended with these words: "Production and distribution of 'Down Home Music' is made possible with funds provided by NPR's Satellite Program Development Fund, the Tennessee Department of Tourism, and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University."

Phil Leonard is field production director at WETS-FM, where he produces the program "Town and Country Music," again highlighting local musicians in performance.

A Couple of New York Linguists in Appalachia?

by Christina Tortora and Judy B. Bernstein

As two linguists interested in the grammar (or "syntax") of varieties of American English, we got it into our heads in 2001 that we wanted to study the syntax of Appalachian English. Of course, developing a research project in Appalachian Studies is not easy from the confines of a university situated in the northeastern United States. We faced two basic problems: no relevant materials to consult and not enough people with similar interests or experiences to talk to.

The ideal place to begin our research, we thought, would be a university in Appalachia with extensive archival materials containing samples of natural and spontaneous Appalachian speech. This would solve the materials problem and would also allow us to meet scholars and students from the Appalachian region, people we could learn from.

East Tennessee State University's Center for Appalachian Studies and Services and the Archives of Appalachia have been a dream come true for us in this regard. In our first visits to the Archives, we found the collections of taped interviews and diaries to be indispensable to our investigation of the linguistic varieties of the region. The highly professional and experienced staff at the Archives guided us to relevant collections, shared their knowledge and wisdom about Appalachian life and culture, and took the time to suggest books and films that might be of interest to our research. In the past year, we have made several visits to the Archives, and our research has advanced considerably.

The Center has proved invaluable in other ways, too. We knew that CASS interim director Ted Olson's invitation to us to give a talk at the summer 2002 Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies (ASIS) course was an opportunity we could not miss. Our talk on varieties of American (including Appalachian) English followed those of accomplished linguist Michael Montgomery, based at the University of South Carolina, and ETSU anthropologist and folklorist Tony Cavender.

The experience was a crucial one for us, especially because Montgomery has shown a keen interest in our work and has become a mentor to us. Another important contact was retired ETSU English professor Tom Burton, who has shared his vast knowledge accumulated through years of fieldwork experience. Finally, through our participation in the summer ASIS course, we met several ETSU students who were enthusiastic about our research and whom we look forward to collaborating with in the near future.

Since our initial visits to CASS, we have given talks on our progress in New York, New Jersey, and abroad. A next step is to seek funds from the National Science Foundation, which would allow us to broaden the scope of our research and involve ETSU students interested in the study of varieties of Appalachian English.

Looking back at the past two years, we realize that our project would not have gotten off the ground without CASS. As scholars from outside the region, we recognize how important it is that American colleges and universities devote resources to the study of their own regions. The academic community would be at a loss without the practice of regional institutions involving themselves in regional issues. As a couple of New York linguists, we gratefully and gleefully reap the benefits that the Center provides, and look forward to our ongoing research on Appalachian English.

Christina Tortora lives on Staten Island and is assistant professor of linguistics at the College of Staten Island and at the Graduate Center (of the City University of New York). Judy B. Bernstein lives in New York City and is assistant professor of linguistics at William Paterson University of New Jersey.

CASS Mentors an Independent Scholar for 10 Years

by Kathleen Curtis Wilson

There is just no other way to say it. My career as an independent researcher and international exhibitions curator would probably not exist if it weren't for the mentoring, encouragement, and financial support I received from the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. At the very least, my career path would have been far different. When I first came to CASS in 1992 and met the new director, Jean Haskell, I had just sold my business in southwest Virginia and had started working as textiles curator for Historic Crab Orchard Museum, Tazewell, Va. With a grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy, I began to study and document regional textile traditions, and I came to the Archives of Appalachia and CASS for research information.

Over the next 10 years, my affiliation with CASS grew, and I came to rely on the Center for direction and encouragement. Although I was never on the CASS staff, I was always welcomed in the Center and given the benefit of the staff's combined expertise. As my career developed, I published articles, gave lectures at Appalachian Studies Association conferences, and participated in CASS's exchange program with the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. During my research overseas I began to connect textile traditions in the United Kingdom to what I had studied in Appalachia. By 1999, I had completed a lengthy documentation of regional textile traditions.

In 2001, my textile research culminated with a major international multivenue exhibition, "Textile Art From Southern Appalachia—the quiet work of women," organized by the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, Mass. As the guest curator of that exhibition and the author of a book by the same name, I remember coming to CASS frequently seeking advice. Center interim director Ted Olson always found the time to look at my work and make worthwhile suggestions about publishers, print quality, or how to work with a commercial press.

Through the generosity of the Archives of Appalachia and curator Norma Myers, I stored approximately 50 textiles under appropriate conditions until the time came for their transport to Massachusetts.

The Center supported my research to unravel folklore about First Lady Ellen Axson Wilson and the Blue Mountain Room in the White House. When I had the opportunity to curate an exhibition on the same subject for the Woodrow Wilson House Museum in Washington, D.C., the staff of *Now & Then* magazine, Jane Woodside and Nancy Fischman, edited the exhibition brochure text, scanned photographs, and suggested design layouts. A year later, I was asked by Jean Haskell to curate an exhibition for CASS at the Reece Museum, combining the story of the Blue Mountain Room and the history of industrial school crafts sold in Washington, D.C., during the first quarter of the 20th century. This exhibition was the main feature of a joint meeting between the Appalachian Consortium and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

When I began researching the history of the Southern Industrial Educational Association, Inc. (SIEA), again as an independent scholar, Haskell suggested that the Center serve as the institution for a funded Fellowship from the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation. Sullivan had been a supporter of the SIEA, which had been organized in 1905 to promote the education of the children of the Southern mountains in such skills as carpentry, building, and agriculture (for boys), and cooking, sewing, and weaving (for girls). During the nearly three years I was a Mary Mildred Sullivan Fellow, I finished a biography of Mary M. Sullivan (publication forthcoming in 2004) and completed much of my research on the SIEA. Again, Nancy Fischman helped with the biography by scanning and correcting all the old photographs I needed for illustrations.

In 2000, I represented CASS at the XIII Ulster-American Heritage Symposium in Omagh, Northern Ireland, where I presented a paper that led to consulting work for the newly formed Ulster-Scots Agency, part of the Good Friday Peace Agreement. While representing CASS at the opening of the Institute for Ulster-Scots Studies at the University of Ulster, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland, I received my current appointment as visiting scholar on the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ulster.

I am honored to have served as the craft section editor for CASS's *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*, and I value the relationships I have made both near and far as a direct result of my association with the entire staff at CASS. During these difficult financial times, it may be just a little too easy to overlook the importance of an interdisciplinary cultural center that reaches across state lines and across socioeconomic differences and that truly benefits all people in an often underserved region.

Courtesy of Kathleen Wilson

Kathleen Wilson's interest in Appalachian textiles led to a 10-year relationship with the Center.

Kathleen Curtis Wilson is visiting scholar on the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland and directs the Ulster Linen Project.

The Archives of Appalachia

The Origins of the Archives of Appalachia

by Richard M. Kesner

In the spring of 1978, I was completing a post-doctoral position as a research archivist at Wayne State University in Detroit, Mich., and I was in search of a more permanent professional opportunity. As luck would have it, Ohio State University had an opening for university archivist and kindly offered me that position. But before I accepted their offer, I visited the campus of East Tennessee State University, interviewing with Ed Walters, the director of libraries. Walters expressed ETSU's desire to establish an archives program with me as its first director. During my brief visit to campus, I fell in love with the region and the school. And so it came to pass that my life and that of ETSU became forever intertwined.

I returned to Detroit, and through some focused research I determined that there was no archives program devoted to the collection of original materials concerning the economic, social, and cultural history of Appalachia. From that point, the vision of an "Archives of Appalachia" at ETSU devoted to these themes began to germinate inside my head. Shortly thereafter, my wife, Susan, and I gathered up our worldly possessions and headed southeast to Johnson City. The move took us far away from family, friends, and the familiar, and introduced us to a whole new world. In the three short but rich years that we resided on Locust Street, we built a home, started a family, and launched our professional careers. For the Kesners, these were happy times as part of a wonderful and hospitable community.

The archives program itself rose from fragile obscurity to remarkable robustness during these same three years. Starting with no building, no staff, and no collections to speak of, the Archives

Courtesy of Richard Kesner

Richard Kesner

moved from success to success. Secretary Katherine Wilson, archivist Mildred Kozsuch, and I served as the core team, complemented by many talented and enthusiastic students. We first secured our program's identity and then established relationships that would one day lead to the donation of research collections to the program. The Archives soon outgrew its nook on the second floor of the Sherrod Library and moved to consume most of the building's ground floor. The collections and the students and scholars who came to use those collections grew in numbers, quality, and diversity.

Upon reflection, beyond establishing the Archives itself, I am most proud of our efforts in community outreach. The Archives team created multi-media programs, drawn from our own collections, about the history of Appalachia and its people. These programs toured local schools, churches, and community centers, and were eventually recognized by both the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Smithsonian Institution for their outstanding use of archives in education. The friendships that I made during the production process for these shows will always remain with me.

Today, much to my pleasure, Norma Myers, one of my former students, serves as director of the Archives. Thanks to her leadership and the continuing efforts and support of so many others, the program is now more firmly established than ever as a regional center for learning and research. From the bottom of my heart, I believe that the story of the Archives of Appalachia reflects in many ways the history of the region itself. Built with communal effort and love, it has endured and prospered despite lean times for over 25 years as a repository for the memories and the spirit of the people of Appalachia.

It was my pleasure to be there at its birth and to have observed through the years how so many other talented people have shaped its destiny. It is to my continuing great satisfaction that we have all reached this milestone in the life of this fine institution. My thanks go out to all of my colleagues for this marvelous accomplishment.

Richard M. Kesner is director of Enterprise Operations at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass.

The Archives of Appalachia: A Living Part of the Community

by Norma Myers

To many, the word "archives" conjures up an image of dusty old papers locked away so that no one is ever allowed to touch them. That certainly isn't the case with the Archives of Appalachia, which exists to collect, to safeguard, and to share the memories of the people of Appalachia. To tell the story of a region and of human life in that region requires more than accumulating statistics or reciting significant events. It would be impossible for someone to understand the Appalachian region and its people without being exposed to the songs, stories, recollections, and beliefs that are so much a part of life here.

As part of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, the Archives seeks to make it easier for both those outside of the region and those born and raised here to understand and celebrate the rich culture of Appalachia. We further believe that no child of Appalachia should grow up ashamed of "where I come from" or unaware of his or her own cultural heritage. So we strive to make our collections as available to a member of the community or to a public school teacher as to an academic scholar. We would never want the Archives to become a forgotten storehouse of relics from the past; instead, we hope to continue to be a living part of the community — the keeper of a continuing accumulation of Appalachian memories.

Since its establishment in 1978, the Archives of Appalachia has become widely known for its media and print collections. Under the direction of its first director, Richard Kesner, the Archives' collection grew rapidly with emphasis on the records of the railroads, grassroots and labor organizations, government agencies, and broadcast media. Kesner built upon the folklore collection already amassed by ETSU professors Thomas Burton and Ambrose Manning, and he collected the works of many regional photographers. In 1981, Ellen Garrison assumed the responsibilities of Archives director and continued to build the collection. Further refining our administrative procedures, Garrison enriched the collection with the records of many local businesses and community organizations and with the papers of individuals and families.

Today, the Archives holds approximately 15 million manuscripts. A large photographic collection contains nearly a quarter million images. In addition, a music and folklore collection holds over 25,000 sound recordings and 6,000 films or video recordings. These materials are supplemented by a special collection of regional books and other publications. Focusing exclusively on the Appalachian region, the Archives of Appalachia holds one of the most extensive collections of Appalachian folklore and music in the nation.

From its creation, the Archives of Appalachia has sought to reach more than the traditional academic scholar and has endeavored to make the information in

its collections available beyond the reading room door. Using materials from our collections, the Archives has developed media programs on topics ranging from the history of railroads and logging in the region to quilting and country music. We created these programs for use in public schools and by community organizations.

In addition, scholars and educators have used our collections to develop curricula and teaching aids on Appalachian history and culture. Documentary filmmakers, news broadcasters, and major motion picture directors have incorporated documents from the collections into their productions and have visited the Archives in order to research music, language and dialect, and folk practices. The development of the World Wide Web provided us with a new tool for sharing our collection, allowing us to put on our web site the descriptive finding aids to our collections (with keyword searching capability). Also on our web site are subject-focused bibliographies and abstracts intended to help individuals in their search for information on particular topics.

Looking to the future, we at the Archives of Appalachia seek to build upon our successes and to enhance our service to the people of Appalachia. We hope to employ new technologies to digitize materials from our collections, which might then be used by teachers and students in electronically connected classrooms

We strive to make our collections as available to a member of the community or to a public school teacher as to an academic scholar.

throughout the region. We could share with a new generation the letters of a Civil War or World War II soldier, the photographs of the building of railroads, or the audio-taped reminiscences of logging camp life. We could create an online music series offering examples of various versions of ballads and of different instrumental styles so that students might hear the voices and musical skills of previous generations of Appalachian people. We want to continue to collect the papers and images and sounds that illustrate the ever-changing story of life in Appalachia and to safeguard those documents in order to share them with those who come after us.

Located on the fourth floor of ETSU's Sherrod Library, the Archives of Appalachia is open to the public Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Archives provides research assistance by mail, telephone, and e-mail, as well as advice on the conservation of materials, and duplication services within the limitations of donor or copyright restrictions. For more information on the collections and services, contact us by mail at Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Box 70295, Johnson City TN 37614; phone us at (423) 439-4338; or see our web site at http://cass.etsu.edu/archives.

Norma Myers is curator at the Archives of Appalachia.

From the Archives: Manufacturing Relocation — Now and Then

When I am cleaning the house, I often turn on the television or the stereo for some background noise to keep me motivated. If I need to get a lot of work done in a hurry, I listen to Bruce Springsteen or Lyle Lovett, or if I am really in a hurry, the Rolling Stones. For leisurely cleaning activities, more often than not, I listen to some television news program. It was during one of my leisurely cleaning frenzies that I heard on television a discussion about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and what it meant for the future of workers in America. One economist was saying that in any free trade situation there were winners and losers, and that it was the government's role to take steps to help the losers. He was speaking of educational opportunities to retrain workers for other jobs. The workers, however, spoke of their fear and shame of not having a job for the first time in decades. They worried that prospective employers would consider them too old to hire or that even after finishing school there would be no work for them in the place they lived. Moving to find work wasn't an easy option. Where would they move? The jobs that they were trained to do were going to China or India or Mexico.

The discussion made me think of some letters that I had found in the Archives of Appalachia. Written by an industrial agent working for the Carolina, Clinchfield, and Ohio Railway, the letters tried to persuade manufacturers of various products to locate in towns along the new railroad's route through the Southern Appalachian Mountains. For the industrialist, whether the multinational corporation of today or the textile manufacturer in the early decades of the 20th century, the motivation to move a company was the same: the desire for profits and cheap labor. (The multinational corporations of today would have the added benefit of escaping the high cost of worker benefits and environmental regulations.) I am sure that the individuals, who 90 years ago were working in the textile plant mentioned in the letter below, would have expressed the same fears as those interviewed for the television news program. They were afraid of not having a job that would pay them a living wage.

The following letter is one of the letters written by the railroad industrial agent. He was trying to entice a manufacturer of overalls to relocate his company from Shenandoah, Pa., to Johnson City, Tenn.

continued on page 50

continued from page 49

Johnson City, Tennessee March 7, 1913

The S. & F. Manufacturing Co.,
Shenandoah, Pa.

Gentlemen:

We note with regret that you have found it necessary to close down your plant on account of your female help having an opinion of its own to such an extent that from all accounts they want to run your business.

If you would manufacture overalls in Johnson City, employing the high-class of female help found at this place and in these mountainous districts you would not be called upon to face the embarrassment that is now confronting you. There is no better help in the world than this mountain type of girl that works ten hours per day for practically one-half the wages that you are forced to pay at this time in Shenandoah.

There are not enough overalls made in the South to supply the overall wearers of one single state and there is no better opening for a plant manufacturing these garments than we have here in Johnson City.

From this point you can deliver your product all along the South Atlantic Seaboard and as far as Western Texas. The territory is practically unlimited and it would take an enormous plant if you attempted to work the field with a large force of salesmen. If you want to get away from the annoyance of strikes and the worries of keen competition I would like to tell you something more about Johnson City and the relief it offers.

Trusting to hear from you, I am,

Yours very truly,

Asst. Industrial Agt.

I am not certain what became of S. & F. Manufacturing Company in Shenandoah. The industrial agent was not successful in convincing them to move their operations to Johnson City. In thinking of the conversations about NAFTA and the railroad recruitment letters, I am reminded of the saying, "The more things change the more they stay the same." NAFTA is the global manifestation of the age-old struggle between the industrialist's desire for profit and the worker's need for a living wage. Still, I wonder how the communities of Appalachia will adjust to the ever-changing economy in this age of instant information and globalization. At the time the letter was written, Shenandoah was a booming anthracite coal mining town. With the closing of the mines in the mid-20th century, the population of Shenandoah declined from 30,000 in its heyday to between 6,000 and 7,000 today. The people of Shenandoah have quite a story to share with us, and perhaps they could give us some good advice.

—Norma Myers

Reece Museum

From Art to Artifacts to NASCAR

by Jackson A. Berea

The presence of a museum on the campus of East Tennessee State University predates the formal dedication of the B. Carroll Reece Museum. An on-campus historical collection was established in 1930 when Charles C. Sherrod, president of East Tennessee State Teachers College, ETSU's predecessor, began to personally solicit gifts for the benefit of the students and community.

In 1961, Louise Goff Reece, the widow of B. Carroll Reece, donated the congressional papers and other memorabilia of her late husband to the university. Carroll Reece served in the United States Congress as the representative from Northeast Tennessee's 1st Congressional District all but six of the years between 1921 and 1961, when he died in office. The acceptance of Louise Reece's generous offer prompted the need to create a location for housing such a collection. The present museum building, then housing the university's department of art, was remodeled and expanded, and was formally dedicated as the B. Carroll Reece Memorial Museum on October 10, 1965. Shortly following this dedication, the art department was moved into the newly built Ball Hall, leaving a collection of art to serve as the core of the new museum's artistic holdings.

The Reece Museum is considered a general museum, having art as well as history collections. Continuing to expand its collections and its exhibition program, the Museum has six galleries, three of which host items from the permanent collection. The three remaining galleries are devoted to temporary exhibits. The permanent collection numbers more than 20,000 objects, including paintings, drawings, prints, and other artwork, plus artifacts that help illustrate the early settlement of what is now known as Johnson City and Washington County, Tenn.

The annual exhibit calendar of the Museum includes the First Tennessee Bank Competition and Art Exhibit, a juried display of art from the region within a 200-mile radius of Johnson City. Another annual exhibit is the Alumni Exhibition, featuring the artwork of former ETSU students. The Museum also hosts traveling shows such as the 20th Century Painting in Tennessee exhibit that showcased works by Tennessee artists spanning more than 100 years.

One of the most publicized events in recent years was the display commemorating the first commercial bottling of the soft drink Mountain Dew. Before being bought by the Pepsi-Cola Company, Mountain Dew was a regional drink, made in Knoxville, Tenn., and first commercially bottled in Johnson City. The exhibit and the accompanying story were picked up by the Associated Press, and the AP article appeared in newspapers across the United States.

The success of hosting a popular culture exhibit of local interest has prompted the museum staff to plan another display with regional origins and national interest. In March 2005, the museum will host an exhibit highlighting the beginnings of the famous Bristol Motor Speedway. National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) racing events held at this track are followed nationally and generate large influxes of visitors to Northeast Tennessee. Only the most avid stock car racing fans know the early history of the Speedway, often referred to as the "world's fastest half-mile."

As a component of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, the Reece Museum strives to support research, artistic creativity, and educational activities that enhance the intellectual and cultural climate of Appalachia. An accredited member of the American Association of Museums, the Museum serves to collect, preserve, and interpret art and artifacts important to Appalachia, and to provide programs of community outreach and public service that contribute to the cultural enrichment of the Appalachian region and its visitors.

The Museum's gallery hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, write Reece Museum, East Tennessee State University, Box 70660, Johnson City TN 37614; phone (423) 439-4392; or visit the museum web site: cass.etsu.edu/museum.

Jackson A. Berea, a former student at East Tennessee State University, is currently pursuing his love of the outdoors as a fly-fishing guide on the rivers of Southwest Virginia.

ETSU Photo Lab

Kathleen Curtis Wilson (standing, foreground) gives a lecture on textiles during a quilt exhibit at the Reece Museum in 1999.

Encyclopedia of Appalachia

Developing a Needed Research Reference

by Jill Oxendine

Probably the most ambitious project ever attempted at the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is the soon-to-be-completed *Encyclopedia of Appalachia.* Modeled after the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, which was compiled at the University of Mississippi's Center for the Study of Southern Culture and published in 1989, the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* — to be published in 2005 by the University of Tennessee Press — will be a comprehensive text about all things Appalachian, from food and crafts to business and health. As the project's managing editor, I can say that working with more than 1,500 writers from across the region to compile some 2,000 articles has been fascinating but often daunting. Things seldom went as planned. Funds sometimes dwindled dangerously low. Writers often reneged on assignments. Some section editors bailed. Things always took longer than expected. But the encyclopedia staff persevered with unrelenting determination, never compromising the quality of the work.

One thing is clear: There is much to know about the Appalachian region. These mountains are the oldest in the United States, having existed for more than 200 million years. The *Encyclopedia* looks at the region in detail — from its physical attributes to its human cultures, from the exploitation and abuse of its vast natural resources to the dedicated efforts of those who galvanized support for social justice.

One of the most compelling reasons for completing the *Encyclopedia* has to do with educating the next generation about the region's truly distinctive history. The origins of the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* can be traced to a grant to CASS from the Tennessee Humanities Council to develop a fourth-grade curriculum about the Appalachian region. The Center worked for several months on that project, involving numerous experts and using Dolly Parton's book *Coat of Many Colors* as a primary resource. Everything went fine until it came time to test the curriculum in fourth-grade classrooms in Johnson City, Tenn. One of the activities for the students was to write radio spots about important Appalachian figures. When the children began their research, they could find few reference books to use.

This incident, along with the success of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, inspired Jean Haskell, then director of CASS, to want to produce a similar text about the Appalachian region. Around this same time, Haskell learned that Rudy Abramson, a native of Florence, Ala., and a retired correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times,* also had an interest in compiling such a book. The two began talking, and soon a partnership developed. With backing from ETSU, Haskell and Abramson began pursuing financial support. Initial funding came from Federal Express, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. Additional funding was procured from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Other contributors have included K-VA-T Foods, Arch Coal, the State of Ohio, ARAMARK, the Tennessee Humanities Council, the Mooneyhan Foundation, Barnes & Noble, and a host of individuals. The Center is extremely grateful to them all for making the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* a reality.

After the book is fully compiled and printed, the next challenge will be making it accessible to young people throughout the region, so the truths and the true grit of our Appalachian ancestors can be known. CASS and UT Press hope that businesses and industries in Appalachian states will help finance the placing of a copy of the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* in every school and library as a public service.

While publishing the print version of the book is the immediate goal, CASS also may produce a digital version, making the current text of the *Encyclopedia* the nucleus of a vast and ever-expanding database. Soon, no child — nor adult, for that matter — will lack for a complete, up-to-date reference source for researching aspects of the story of Appalachia.

Jill Oxendine is managing editor of the Encyclopedia of Appalachia.

William Strode

The *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* will be a resource for information about people in Appalachia who have had a profound effect on the lives of others in the region. In 1965, Ollie Combs was dragged off her land and jailed by the Knott County, Ky., sheriff when she attempted to block bulldozers from strip mining her land. The removal of "Widow" Combs galvanized opposition to strip mining in Kentucky.

Appalachian, Scottish, and Irish Studies

Appalachia, Scotland, and Me

by Thomas G. Burton

My association with the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services began in the planning stage when I was asked to write the narrative sections of the Centers of Excellence grant proposal to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. From one perspective, however, the roots of my involvement reach back to the folklore monographs that Ambrose Manning, my colleague in ETSU's English department, and I edited with the assistance of research associate Annette Burton. These monographs and the associated field recordings became the Burton-Manning Collection of Folklore, housed at ETSU's Archives of Appalachia. The work was sponsored by and the monographs published by the Institute of Regional Studies directed by ETSU geography professor Robert Peplies. (That institute became one of the models for development of CASS.)

Following these publications, our work in traditional studies was expanded with the encouragement and support of Arthur DeRosier, who at that time was ETSU's graduate dean and director of the Research Advisory Council. For example, Manning and I established the Oral History Archives, eventually subsumed under the Archives of Appalachia. Hal Smith, then head of ETSU's Sherrod Library, aided in this venture by furnishing us an office in the library. The English department, of course, supported us in many projects that were interrelated with the Institute of Appalachian Affairs and, later, with CASS.

It is impossible for me to delineate what was strictly CASS or Institute of Appalachian Affairs or English department folklore or Appalachian Consortium (a consortium of 16 colleges, universities, and other agencies in the region formed to perpetuate, preserve, and promote the heritage of Southern Appalachia). The Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program (ASSP), established in 1988, is a case in point of how research or service activities were not strictly departmentalized.

Barbara McDermitt, a doctoral candidate at the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh, was doing a comparative study of Appalachian and Scottish Jack Tales. She came to ETSU in 1988, to use archival tapes from the Burton-Manning Collection of people like North Carolina storyteller Ray Hicks. I had heard of the School of Scottish Studies from a ballad scholar while I was studying at Vanderbilt University, and I was eager to meet McDermitt. During that meeting, she said that I should visit the School, and I later took her up on the suggestion.

Once I saw what was available at the School of Scottish Studies and met all the interesting, cordial people there, I thought, "Hey, this is neat for me and would be great for other faculty and students at East Tennessee State." Several years later, School of Scottish Studies director Jack MacQueen, lecturer in Scottish ethnology Maggie Mackay, and I secured an exchange agreement between the University of Edinburgh and ETSU.

At that time CASS was the principal ETSU sponsor of the exchange program, but the courses were offered through the English department, and my work in Appalachian-Scottish Studies, particularly during the summers, was part of my departmental teaching assignment. CASS, however, was our base. Richard Blaustein, with members of his staff, especially secretary Ruth Hausman, assisted in every way they could to make the program a success — and with the cooperation of the School of Scottish Studies, it did succeed.

In 1988, students and faculty from the School of Scottish Studies joined members of our staff and student body in Johnson City for a series of lectures, performances, and field trips. The following year, a group of students and I invaded Scotland for a wonderful educational experience. In alternate years, ETSU continued to host the Scots and be hosted by them.

In order to supplement monies gener-

ETSU University Relations, courtesy of University Archives.

Tom Burton demonstrates the use of the tape recorder for a folklore class participant in 1980.

ated by tuition, we appealed to both regional and Scottish clan societies and other private sources. Our students even sold concessions at ETSU football games to raise cash. CASS continued to be as generous as it could to ASSP, but the program had no "hard" budgeted support until the early 1990s when Robert Alphonso, vice president for academic affairs at that time, secured funds for ASSP administered through the Office of International Studies (OIS). Henry Antkiewicz, OIS director and a professor of history, assisted us as well with secretarial help, international phone calls, and program marketing. Subsequently, during the latter years I directed the program (my tenure ended in 1995), there were three sponsors — CASS, the English department, and OIS.

My work with ASSP also engendered personal research; for example, I held a "non-instructional assignment" during 1992, spending six months in Scotland among the Travellers, Scotland's traditional itinerant people. My involvement with CASS illustrates what the Center was designed in part to do — plant, water, and graft together the various efforts of individuals in their study of and service to Appalachia.

Thomas Burton is professor emeritus of English at East Tennessee State University.

Scotland and Appalachia: An Affectionate Review and Glance to the Future

by Margaret A. Mackay

A trio of scholars deserves the credit for creating in the 1980s the link between the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services and associated programs at East Tennessee State University. They are English professor Tom Burton, now retired from ETSU, John MacQueen, then director of the School of Scottish Studies, and Barbara McDermitt (now Barbara McDermitt Yule).

In the course of her Edinburgh doctoral research on Scottish and Appalachian storytelling traditions in the late 1980s, Yule had met Burton and had come to know the rich resources — human and archival — for comparative study housed at or near ETSU.

While the Scotch-Irish background to Appalachian cultural patterns had been, and rightly continues to be, a focus in Appalachian Studies, somewhat less attention had been given to its Highland and Lowland Scots elements, some of them of course mediated through Ulster. Yule's work showed the potential for a two-way program that could ensure greater knowledge of shared aspects of life, past and present. MacQueen, who had spent time in the United States earlier in his career, was enthusiastic, as was Burton.

Thus, the scheme was launched that has brought, in rotation, staff, students, and interested members of the wider community served by ETSU to Scotland (and later to Ireland), as well as staff and students from the School of Scottish Studies to ETSU during the summers. Over the years, lectures, discussions, museum visits, field trips, ceilidhs (traditional music gatherings), and interaction with tradition-bearers have provided groups from both ETSU and the University of Edinburgh with unique insights into two culture areas.

From a personal perspective, I have felt privileged to learn about Appalachia, whose past history and present characteristics offered new readings not only of Scottish phenomena but also of areas in my native Canada, the Atlantic maritime provinces particularly. Like all the Edinburgh participants, I have experienced tremendous kindness, generosity, and hospitality from our ETSU hosts, and am grateful for the opportunity to become acquainted with the work of its outstanding scholars, archives, and community contacts. I have made firm friends whom I value greatly.

The Archives of the School of Scottish Studies now hold theses based on Appalachian material prepared by our undergraduates as well as copies of the Burton-Manning Collection of Folklore — Appalachian traditions collected by ETSU English professors Tom Burton and Ambrose Manning. We were pleased when one of our degree-holders was able to undertake postgraduate study at ETSU on a St. Andrew's Society scholarship, and we hope that more of this kind of activity can take place. What an excellent experience it has been for some of our students to contribute to the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia!* Over the years, gifts and purchases of Appalachian publications have enhanced our library, and we have exchanged our own journals to mutual benefit.

The Center's *Now & Then* Magazine has been a constant stimulus and inspiration to us, its vibrant combination of articles, photographs, creative writing, and reviews providing a wealth of information on contemporary Appalachia as well as on the region's past. The magazine has long been a vital first port of call for students new to Appalachian Studies.

The impact of our connection has gone far beyond the summer program. It has always been a pleasure to welcome ETSU folk at any time of the year on research visits. Edinburgh is the only university in the United Kingdom where Appalachian material contributes to the honors degree curriculum (in Scottish Ethnology and American Studies). This link began in the context of scholarly endeavor and mutual respect for the traditions of our regions and for their study. This, I feel, should also be our fingerpost to the future.

Methods of teaching and learning change as do the institutions that foster them, and financial and other constraints may offer new challenges and priorities. But if we are true to the disciplines that have nurtured us, we will still want to explore, to study, to research in certain tried and tested ways. Electronic aids will help us, but our subject is human activity and communication, and to understand this we require actual contact. I hope that this can continue to be the keynote of our future work together.

Margaret A. Mackay is director of the School of Scottish Studies Archives at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music Program

Contributing to a Reappraisal of Regional Music Culture

by Jack Tottle

In my experience, being raised to recognize the great value of formal education does not imply the inability to stand in awe of brilliant men and women who are self-educated. Being strongly encouraged as a child to speak meticulously correct standard English does not require a dismissive attitude toward those who speak colloquially. Growing up in a home where the cultural icons are Mozart, Michelangelo, Dickens (Charles, not "Little" Jimmy), and Shakespeare need not blind a person to the power, integrity, humanity, and musical artistry of Jimmie Rodgers, the Carter Family, Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Ralph Stanley, and Doc Watson, along with their musical peers and progeny.

Growing up in a home where the cultural icons are Mozart, Michelangelo, Dickens (Charles, not "Little" Jimmy), and Shakespeare need not blind a person to the power, integrity, humanity, and musical artistry of Jimmie Rodgers, the Carter Family, Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Ralph Stanley, and Doc Watson.

The 1940s and 1950s produced some of the most influential classic recordings. Bluegrass was — to most of mainstream America — a non-music. Its audience was mostly southern, rural, and blue-collar. Like America's other great contributions to world musical culture — including African American spirituals, the blues, and jazz — bluegrass was the music of people with minimal formal education, low-wage jobs, and negligible social status. It was virtually ignored in the national press until the 1960s, when northern urban folk revivalists discovered bluegrass and included it in youth-oriented concerts and folk festivals.

Even by 1982, when the first experimental courses in bluegrass and country music were offered at ETSU, a traveler to the Tri-Cities of Johnson City, Kingsport, and Bristol, Tenn., and Bristol, Va., would have been hard-pressed to find public acknowledgement of the region's remarkable heritage in these areas of music. With notable exceptions of the Carter Family

Earl Neikirk, Bristol Herald Courier

The power of bluegrass music to transcend barriers of language, culture, and geography is vividly evident in the exciting work of ETSU Bluegrass Pride Band member Takeharu Kunimoto (foreground), shown with fellow musician J.P. Mathes II and the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program's assistant director, Raymond McLain. A widely respected performer of traditional Japanese music and drama in his native country, Mr. Kunimoto is the first musician ever to adapt the Japanese traditional three-string folk instrument known as the *shamisen* to bluegrass. Since his arrival on a yearlong fellowship to study bluegrass and storytelling at ETSU, his virtuosity has astonished and delighted numerous audiences ranging from the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Award Show in Louisville, Ky., to Brussels, Belgium, where the ETSU Bluegrass Pride Band recently performed at the invitation of the American military delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Fold in Hiltons, Va., and the Down Home Picking Parlor in Johnson City, there wasn't a great deal of bluegrass to be heard publicly on a regular basis.

Today, how the environment has changed! In Bristol, a huge mural now commemorates the 1927 Victor Talking Machine Company recording sessions known to scholars as the "Big Bang of Country Music." Another mural, "ALL In The Family II," graces the main hall of the new Sherrod Library at ETSU. This mural depicts the varied cultural and musical strains — including African American, Anglo/European, and even Hawaiian — that underlie contemporary bluegrass and country music.

Music enthusiasts can now attend informal jam sessions any night of the week. Concerts by regional and national artists are so plentiful that even the most diehard fan would be hard pressed to keep up with all of them. Bluegrass and old time country music are now featured prominently on both public and commercial radio. Television stations in Bristol, Johnson City, and Roanoke, Va., have all aired ETSU Bluegrass Band specials in prime time, and one of the stations repeatedly uses a bluegrass video of the group as a station identifier.

In 1994 the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance (BCMA) was founded by local music enthusiasts with important participation from both CASS and the ETSU Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program. Since that time it has worked effectively with business, political, arts, and educational entities to promote understanding of, and respect for, bluegrass and country music. The BCMA Museum, located in the Bristol Mall, features attractive displays relating to a host of major musical figures with regional ties. A partnership between CASS and BCMA resulted in the highlighting of the region's music — including the ETSU Bluegrass Pride Band — at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Mall in Washington D.C.

ETSU has now become a magnet for young musicians from across the nation and from abroad who want to study bluegrass in the heart of Appalachia. (Total enrollment during the fall 2003 semester exceeded 200.) ETSU Bluegrass Bands have now performed East Tennessee's music in world capitals from Washington, D.C., to Moscow to Tokyo to Brussels.

ETSU has now become a magnet for young musicians from across the nation and from abroad who want to study bluegrass in the heart of Appalachia. ETSU Bluegrass Bands have now performed East Tennessee's music in world capitals from Washington, D.C., to Moscow to Tokyo to Brussels.

Literally millions of listeners worldwide have been captivated by the music — both live and recorded — of ETSU alumni. Among the best known are country superstar Kenny Chesney and bluegrass Grammy winners Tim Stafford of Blue Highway, Adam Steffey of Mountain Heart, and Barry Bales of Alison Krauss and Union Station. Films such as *O Brother, Where Art Thou?, Songcatcher,* and the newly released *Cold Mountain* feature musical contributions by ETSU students and alumni.

Long before there was any serious thought of integrating the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program into the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, CASS provided indispensable support — both logistical and financial. This proved absolutely crucial both during the 1980s and 1990s at moments when the program's very existence hung in the balance. It is no exaggeration to say that without the energy and vision provided by CASS, the program would long ago have ceased to exist. (The Bluegrass program did not become part of CASS until fall 2000.)

The degree to which ETSU, CASS, and the Bluegrass program deserve credit for the traditional music renascence of the past two decades can best be judged by those not directly involved. For me, personally, the greatest challenge has been to have the music taken seriously by those not initially disposed to do so. It has been well worth the effort.

A strong and dynamic Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is ideally positioned to play a substantial role in the areas of scholarship, education, and service to the region. Those who believe that the Appalachian heritage and culture, including its music, are valuable and relevant in today's world will, I am confident, be greatly heartened by new developments as CASS moves ahead into this new millennium.

Musician and songwriter Jack Tottle is founder and director of the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Country Music program at East Tennessee State University.

Cecily Saylor

Hard labor bore me,
mother only a name
scratched on a fieldstone.
Pa married right away,

a woman with three older
than me. Cinderella,
I scrubbed, toted, hoed.
I married the first likely

man to cross the mountains,
out of the frying pan
into the fire, my own hard
labor, four babes in five

years, one's name scratched
on a fieldstone, no let-up
in the scrubbing, toting,
hoeing. When my man was

killed in the war, I hitched
the mule to the plow and
followed it down the corn
rows. Not much I didn't

turn a hand to — hunter,
tanner, shoemaker, weaver,
tailor, herbalist, midwife,
undertaker, preacher.

Put it this way. Need's
the meanest boss ever was.
No stepmother, nor drunken
husband, can come close.

— Elizabeth Howard

Elizabeth Howard has been published or has work forthcoming in Big Muddy, Cold Mountain Review, Slant, California Quarterly, Poem, *and other journals.* Elixir *has published a short story.*

20 Years of NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

Volume 1, Number 1, Fall 1984: Introducing *Now & Then*
Volume 2, Number 1 and 2, Winter/Spring 1985: Appalachian Women
Volume 2, Number 3, Fall 1985: Appalachian Music
Volume 3, Number 1, Winter 1986: Black Appalachians
Guest Editor: Ed Cabbell
Volume 3, Number 2, Summer 1986: Homecoming '86
Volume 3, Number 3, Autumn 1986: Cherokees
Guest Editor: Mary Chiltoskey
Volume 4, Number 1, Spring 1987: Appalachian Childhood
Guest Editor: Pauline Cheek
Volume 4, Number 2, Summer 1987: Appalachian Writing
Volume 4, Number 3, Fall 1987: Appalachian Veterans
Guest Editor: Bert Allen
Volume 5, Number 1, Spring 1988: Working in Appalachia
Volume 5, Number 2, Summer 1988: Insiders/Outsiders
Volume 5, Number 3, Fall 1988: Perceptions and Prescriptions in Appalachia
Volume 6, Number 1, Spring 1989: Health in Appalachia
Volume 6, Number 2, Summer 1989: Sense of Place in Appalachia
Volume 6, Number 3, Fall 1989: Appalachian Art Folk & Fine
Volume 7, Number 1, Spring 1990: Rural Appalachia
Volume 7, Number 2, Summer 1990: Urban Appalachia
Volume 7, Number 3, Fall 1990: Activism in Appalachia
Volume 8, Number 1, Spring 1991: Tourism in Appalachia
Volume 8, Number 2, Summer 1991: Family and Community in Appalachia
Volume 8, Number 3, Fall 1991: The Media & Appalachia
Volume 9, Number 1, Spring 1992: New Appalachian Writing
Volume 9, Number 2, Summer 1992: The Scottish-Appalachian Connection
Volume 9, Number 3, Fall 1992: Sports in Appalachia
Volume 10, Number 1, Spring 1993: Education in Appalachia
Volume 10, Number 2, Summer 1993: Civil War in Appalachia
Volume 10, Number 3, Fall 1993: Storytelling and Appalachia
Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 1994: Politics in Appalachia
Volume 11, Number 2, Summer 1994: 10th Anniversary Celebration
Volume 11, Number 3, Fall 1994: Rituals and Celebrations
Volume 12, Number 1, Spring 1995: Appalachia and the Environment
Volume 12, Number 2, Summer 1995: Discovering Appalachian Music
Volume 12, Number 3, Winter1995: Appalachian Entrepreneurs and Innovators
Volume 13, Number 1, Spring 1996: Conserving Appalachia
Volume 13, Number 2, Summer 1996: Appalachian Visions: How the Region Sees Itself
Volume 13, Number 3, Winter1996: Religion in Appalachia
Volume 14, Number 1, Spring 1997: Appalachian Humor
Volume 14, Number 2, Summer 1997: Appalachian Photography
Volume 14, Number 3, Winter 1997: Northern Appalachia
Volume 15, Number 1, Spring 1998: Food in Appalachia
Volume 15, Number 2, Summer 1998: Appalachian Poetry
Volume 15, Number 3, Winter 1998: Transportation in Appalachia
Volume 16, Number 1, Spring 1999: Architecture in Appalachia
Volume 16, Number 2, Summer 1999: Appalachian Lives
Volume 17, Number 1, Spring 2000: The Power of Illness & The Promise of Health
Volume 17, Number 2, Summer 2000: Appalachian Accents
Volume 17, Number 3, Winter 2000: Museums & Archives: Finding New Ways to Tell Appalachia's Story
Volume 18, Number 1, Spring 2001: Appalachian Rivers, Lakes & Streams: A Region's Life Reflected in Its Waters
Volume 18, Number 2, Summer 2001: Always a Love Story: Fiction from the Appalachian Mountains
Volume 18, Number 3, Winter 2001: Striking a Balance: Conserving & Developing Appalachia's Natural Resources
Volume 19, Number 1, Spring 2002: Beyond Our Borders: Appalachia and the World
Volume 19, Number 2, Summer 2002: First Person Appalachia: The Personal Essay Issue
Volume 19, Number 3, Winter 2002: Paying Tribute
Volume 20, Number 1, Spring 2003: Raised Up in the Mountains: The Youth of Appalachia

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES IS 20 YEARS OLD. *This issue of* Now & Then *completes Volume 20. To commemorate this milestone, I asked several people who have been involved with* Now & Then *over the years to talk about their experiences and give us some of their thoughts about the impact of the magazine in their own lives and on the broader Appalachian community. I asked for a personal take, and that is what I got from the five people who responded. The question about the survival of* Now & Then *has not yet been answered, and several of the writers in this section have addressed their feelings about what the loss of* Now & Then *may mean, especially to the writers of Appalachia. As we go to press, the question of who will be leading the Center into the future has been answered. We have yet to talk about the role a magazine like* Now & Then *can play in the future of this organization. I hope that* Now & Then *will remain in some form, a form that reflects the mission of the Center to educate the public about the region, to enhance the quality of life in Appalachia, and to support and disseminate research and artistic endeavors that focus on the Appalachian region. The diversity of Appalachia can truly be expressed through a vehicle such as* Now & Then, *a unique magazine that is accessible to everyone, and that gives a voice to those who live in and work in and write about the region.*

—NF

Now & Then Then

by Fred Waage (editor 1984 to 1986)

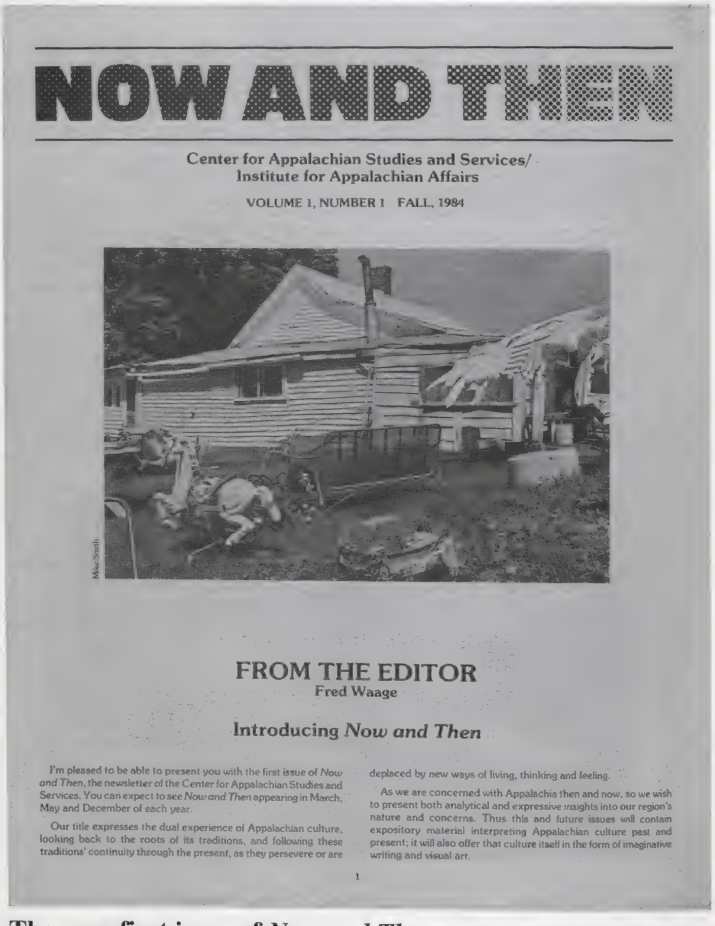
In 1974, due to strange circumstances, I was working as the supposed "business manager" for the bimonthly magazine of the environmental organization Friends of the Earth (FOE), *Not Man Apart.* David Brower, the fiery environmentalist, had formed FOE after being "fired" as director of the Sierra Club. I had no business being a business manager for a magazine that itself had no business, but mingling with organizers and lobbyists got me to wondering about how best to gain the support of the "Ignorant Multitude" for environmental reform. I got the naively romantic idea that political arguments might be less effective in this enterprise than appeals to an Innate Love for Nature.

The consequences of this naivete were, first, a deeply flawed and swiftly rejected proposal to the FOE board for a companion publication to *Not Man Apart* that would more effectively appeal to its audience, and second, the quixotic self-publication in my new location, the armpit of New Jersey, of a newsprint magazine I entitled *Second Growth: Literature of Environmental Concern.* Two issues were produced. This was the "high golden age" of environmentalism, and some significant folks contributed—poets William Stafford and David Ignatow, beat poet Allen Ginsberg's father Louis, and California activist/songwriter Malvina Reynolds. However, I was, then as now, broke—I had no money to distribute the publication, and I ran out of energy. As prize-winning poet Gary Snyder said in a note to me, the magazine was like "second growth" itself: "stuff coming up all over, no pattern or 'bones.'"

When I came to East Tennessee State University in 1978, the director of the then-new Institute for Appalachian Affairs, Linda Scott, approved my idea of transforming *Second Growth's* subtitle into *Appalachian Nature and Culture* and of making it the official publication of the Institute. I remember laying out the first (and only) copy of this incarnation on the same table where my wife, Ginger Renner, and I changed the diapers of our new baby, Melissa. Among its contributors of photos, poems, fiction, and essays were Appalachian poets P.J. Laska, Lillie Chaffin, and Jim Wayne Miller, and scholar Gene Wilhelm Jr.

With the swift extinction of this version of *Second Growth,* my wife and I tried the self-publishing route once more, using the earlier "kitchen table" technique of typing, photocopying, and stapling. We ended up with two excessively small and equally undistributable issues.

When Richard Blaustein became the director of the retitled Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, I approached him with the same proposal I offered Linda Scott in 1978. We



NOW AND THEN

Center for Appalachian Studies and Services/
Institute for Appalachian Affairs

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1 FALL, 1984

Mac Stoch

FROM THE EDITOR
Fred Waage

Introducing *Now and Then*

I'm pleased to be able to present you with the first issue of *Now and Then*, the newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. You can expect to see *Now and Then* appearing in March, May and December of each year.

Our title expresses the dual experience of Appalachian culture, looking back to the roots of its traditions, and following these traditions' continuity through the present, as they persevere or are displaced by new ways of living, thinking and feeling.

As we are concerned with Appalachia then and now, so we wish to present both analytical and expressive insights into our region's nature and concerns. Thus this and future issues will contain expository material interpreting Appalachian culture past and present; it will also offer that culture itself in the form of imaginative writing and visual art.

1

The very first issue of *Now and Then* came out on cream, non-gloss paper printed with brown ink.

agreed that the periodical would lose once and for all the jinxed moniker *Second Growth.* It became *Now and Then,* with a thematic focus for each issue, and a centerfold juxtaposing the "then" and the "now" of the theme. It was characterized as a newsletter, and was meant to be published thrice yearly. The paper was non-gloss cream and the type was brown. The photos were brown and white. Volume 1, Number 1 was issued in the fall of 1984.

My introduction to this first issue said: "Our title expresses the dual experience of Appalachian culture, looking back to the roots of its traditions, and following these traditions' continuity through the present, as they persevere or are deplaced by new ways of living, thinking, and feeling." It included reports from the Archives, the Reece Museum, and the Center itself, photos by ETSU art professor and world class photographer Mike Smith, poetry by several people including Johnson City playwright, poet, and author Jo Carson, and a story by North Carolina writer Annis Ward Jackson.

Subsequent issues under my editorship highlighted Appalachian Women, Appalachian Music, Black Appalachians, and "Homecoming '86," commemorating a statewide celebration of the history and traditions of Tennessee.

With the editorship of Pat Arnow and her successors, through the rest of the 1980s and 1990s, *Now & Then* radically increased its quality, circulation, coverage, and professionalism. I hope that the magazine will, following this clearcutting at the height of its power, somehow experience its own second growth.

Fred Waage is professor of English at East Tennessee State University.

Now & Then Becomes a Then

A former editor reflects on a couple of kinds of cancelled destiny

by Pat Arnow (editor 1986 to 1994)

I can no longer see the mountains, and living in New York City, I rarely hear about Appalachia. It's probably for the best. News of the region is like the coverage of Hillary Clinton by the New York *Post* — Rupert Murdoch's tabloid. The paper likes to make the senator look bad. She's probably relieved when the *Post* ignores her. Being ignored by the national media could be the best thing that can happen to Appalachia, too.

Last time I heard anything about Appalachia in the news was the May 31, 2003, capture of Eric Rudolph. He's the alleged abortion clinic and Atlanta Olympics bomber. After five years on the run, he got caught in Murphy, N.C., behind a supermarket hunting for food in a dumpster (or, as one friend calls it, "dump fishing").

Residents expressed relief mixed with dread of the press. "Folks in far western North Carolina said they weren't particularly eager to step back into the media limelight," reported the Asheville, N.C., *Citizen-Times.* "They remember all those photographs five years ago of overall-clad men, quotes from residents on how they hoped Rudolph wouldn't be caught and sound bites from neighbors about their support for the bomber's anti-abortion views. They said they didn't recognize themselves or their community in the picture painted by the media."

And then there was *Now & Then*

Now & Then gave residents a recognizable portrait. That was the idea anyway. It wouldn't be all poverty, ignorance, and moonshine, nor would it be all self-sufficient and quaint. None of that "the past is better" mantra. From the beginning — I started writing for the magazine's second issue and became editor a few issues later — we aimed to present Appalachia in all its complexity, politically and socially. We showed a region bursting with arts. We were one of those rare publications — in any region — that published plenty of poetry and fiction, personal essays, photography. The work was robust with a sense of place.

The magazine provided a home for unselfconscious voices. But not uncritical. The writers quarreled with every assumption. We even took on Harry Caudill, the man who brought the bad economic and social conditions of Appalachia to the attention of President John F. Kennedy. Caudill's book, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area,* sparked the War on Poverty in the 1960s (launched by Lyndon Johnson in Eastern

Pat Arnow

It is not mountains Pat Arnow sees outside her balcony anymore, but the high-rises of New York.

Kentucky). The book was magnificent. Except that Caudill attributed many of the mountains' problems to inbreeding. For years, that assumption stood unchallenged. We got a medical anthropologist to present some facts that debunked the myth in "Night Comes to the Chromosomes" (by Pamela Zahorik, Spring 1989).

The poetry editor at that time, Jo Carson, and I waded through the blood and guts of a Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *The Kentucky Cycle,* an epic journey through 200 years of Kentucky history. Written by Los Angeles resident Robert Schenkkan,

who had spent two days in Kentucky, the play was filled with murder, treachery, and cruelty. In an interview I did with Jo, she proposed a play about 200 years of L.A. history featuring bizarre highway violence. She planned plenty of drive-by shootings, but starts her history with a "horseback ride-by shooting." ("Jo Carson's Los Angeles Cycle," Spring 1994).

Archives of Appalachia archivist Norma Myers and I studied crime rates in American cities and found that Appalachian towns were safer than comparable-sized towns elsewhere (Summer 1991).

A whole gang of us movie lovers created a guide to all the films and TV shows that had featured Appalachians. We created icons for quick reference: a moonshine jug meant the movie portrayed stereotypes. A gun represented violence, a rabbit promiscuity, a gap-tooth smile for bad accents. A lot of symbols decorated the listing for *Deliverance.* ("The Hills Meet Hollywood," Fall 1991).

We were there to help people in the region to define and portray themselves, discuss problems among themselves, show off to each other.

Outsiders who cared to look would get a feel for the breadth of ideas in the territory, the strength of the writing and art, the quiet perversity of the humor.

I left *Now & Then* at the end of its first ten years, and Jane Woodside nurtured it for the next ten. A 20-year run. It's not enough. You don't get encouragement from the outside. From here in New York it's clear that the outside doesn't even notice you most of the time or listen to the voices of the region. And you don't want them noticing the rest of the time. It's up to Appalachia to keep its own voice. That's what *Now & Then* — and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services — have been about.

Destiny revisited

Even though budget cuts constrain the work, the impact of what we did will continue to be felt. The proof for me is that a play I co-wrote under the auspices of CASS will be produced by The Necessary Theatre in Louisville in May 2004. It was in the late 1980s that CASS supported development of a drama about the life and death by suicide of an East Tennessee State University English professor, Christine Burleson. An inspirational teacher, she brought Shakespeare to many students who were the first in their families to attend college.

My husband, Steve Giles, a psychologist, and Christine Murdock, an actor with The Road Company, and I did a psychological autopsy to find out why this remarkable woman shot herself. (We had heard of her because Steve and I had moved to her former home when we came to Johnson City, and visitors mentioned her with a slightly awed tone.)

We found out that she was quite ill and about to enter a nursing home, a fate she did not want to endure. The play, produced by The Road Company, helped the people who had known her. (The Road Company is another regional endeavor that survived some 20 years — a professional, not-for-profit theater in East Tennessee that created original drama and that took their plays on tour. Its work resonates, too, as former members go on acting, directing, and teaching throughout the region and beyond.)

Burleson's story had meaning for others as well. *Cancell'd Destiny* (named from the line in Shakespeare's poem about a suicide, "The Rape of Lucretia,") went on to a Southern theater festival in Atlanta, Ga., and production by the theater department at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va.

One Road Company member who worked on the play was Laurene Scalf. She now lives in Louisville and works with The Necessary Theatre. She will direct a new production of *Cancell'd Destiny* there. (See Laurene Scalf's essay, following).

Here was the life of a teacher, a single woman, remarkable in her time for going off to study at Oxford. She came home after teaching elsewhere to look after her aging father, teach at the local college, try her hand at writing novels, have a house built to her specifications, grow older on her own, and take her fate in her own hands with courage and dignity. In its outline form, it sounds like a life that might have been lived anywhere *but* the mountains. An East Tennessee woman at Oxford in the 1920s is hard to picture. But it happened, and it is a mountaineer's story. So are a lot of other stories you'll never read in the New York *Post.*

That was the idea with *Now & Then.*

Pat Arnow is a writer, photographer, and constant tourist in New York City's Lower East Side.

Thief of Faults

by Laurene Scalf (assistant editor, 1991 to 1993)

Hang that Pat Arnow! In the dozen or so years that I've known her, she has tried systematically to destroy my most cherished character traits: arrogance, gullibility, and sloth. To this end, she has effectively employed CASS and *Now & Then.*

In 1990, I moved from Chicago to Johnson City, Tenn., to work with The Road Company, a professional theater. I arrived during the run of *Cancell'd Destiny,* a play written by Road Company ensemble member Christine Murdock, *Now & Then* editor Pat Arnow, and Arnow's psychologist husband Steve Giles, who had received a grant from CASS to research the life of Christine Burleson, a former Shakespeare professor at East Tennessee State University. I loved the show, and I kept to myself the arrogant opinion that, were I producing and/or directing it, I would have done this or that differently. My lovingly nurtured habit of sloth ensured I'd never have to actually take responsibility for producing or directing it myself.

A year passed. I loved working with The Road Company, and I had made some good friends both in and out of the theater group. But loneliness and a sense of dislocation, which began shortly after I moved to Johnson City and which I expected to dissipate with time, grew steadily stronger. One day at a potluck party, Pat Arnow asked me, "How are you?" I hardly knew her then, but there was something about the way she asked it, something about her expression of total openness and acceptance, and I told her about my loneliness, my restlessness, my bore-

dom, my sense of being an animal in the wrong habitat. Arnow let me talk; she smiled while I recounted the things I liked about being in Johnson City, and she nodded when I told her what I desperately missed about Chicago: the sky, the lake, the multiplicity of choices. All she said was, "You want to get a drink after work tomorrow?" I was so grateful I could have cried. Little did I suspect her nefarious plans for me.

She got me drunk on liquor and then she got me hooked on *Now & Then,* of which she was editor. The magazine examined and celebrated an Appalachia far more complex than the one portrayed in the popular media. Of course, being Appalachia-born—though raised in the Midwest—I already knew that

Courtesy of Christine Murdock

Christine Murdock played Christine Burleson in The Road Company's production of *Cancell'd Destiny* at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg in February 1990.

the popular image of Appalachia was superficial and skewed. What impressed me was the quality of the magazine. The writing was good, some of it very good, and each issue showed a clear, well-developed editorial vision. It made me want to write more, write better. But there was that sloth thing. . . .

That Arnow woman began to chip away at my sloth. She invited me to be part of a writer's group that met regularly on Tuesday evenings. I couldn't get by anymore on just mulling ideas in my head while hiking or swimming. I had to sit down and actually write something to bring to each meeting. Responses were kindly critical and usually helpful, inspiring me (and others in the group, I suspect) to write even more. And I was beginning to find my habitat interesting, if not exactly home.

Having lured me onto the ranch, Arnow then lassoed me and pulled me into the corral: She convinced me to apply for the position of assistant editor of *Now & Then.* I loved the work. I learned something from every article and poem submitted to the magazine. But the real lessons were learned from the editor herself, beginning with the first issue on which I worked. A writer submitted a wonderful piece about his high school basketball team. I proceeded to "edit" the essay, and by the time I was done, the author himself would not have recognized it. Gently, calmly, Arnow showed me that I didn't have to make it mine in order to make it good, that the job of an editor was to bring out *the writer's* strengths, not her own. With each ensuing issue, I became less arrogant and began to appreciate and allow for different styles of expression.

Having robbed me of much treasured sloth and arrogance, Arnow now began to ransack my gullibility. Sometimes we would receive submissions that purported to pass as personal experience essays, and some of them drew me in right away. I would be astonished, therefore, when Arnow would read them and laugh at their (to her) transparent falsehood. I would read them again and sheepishly admit that, yes, they did sound pretty flimsy on second reading.

Though I loved the work, loved *Now & Then,* and had come to appreciate the cultural quality of Johnson City, I was still dolorously out of place there. An opportunity opened for me in Louisville, and I took it. Louisville is situated on a body of water and has a lot of sky and a measure of unpredictability, all things that I needed. I settled in and contentedly began recovering all the arrogance, gullibility, and sloth that had been taken from me.

Then last March I spent a few days in New York City, whither Pat Arnow and Steve Giles had moved a few years ago. My companion, Keith, and I took the subway from our midtown hotel to the Lower East Side to have lunch with Giles. Arnow was vacationing in Florida at the time. I suspected she was making use of some of that sloth she had purloined from me years before. As we rode back uptown, I told Keith about the play Giles and Arnow and Murdock had written with help from a CASS grant. He recommended that I submit it to The Necessary Theatre, of which I'm an ensemble member, for production next season.

Once I got back to Louisville, I contacted the playwrights and asked permission to submit the script. They enthusiastically consented. The play was accepted for production next May, with me as director. Thrilled, I got busy putting a crew together. Keith Kimmel will design the set and lights, Linda Probus will be the costumer, Adrienne Howard will stage manage. Auditions are set for November 2. I've been reading all the background material I can get my hands on. "This will be a lot of work for you," one of my friends said to me recently. I paused and glowered at the script I was holding. I could feel the sloth draining from my veins. Damn! Pat Arnow got me again!

Laurene Scalf lives in Louisville, Ky., where she is an ensemble member of The Necessary Theatre and research director for Radio One.

A Forum for Celebraton

by Linda Parsons Marion (poetry editor, 1995-2003)

I love the joke where St. Peter is leading a new group of folks through heaven, and they pass some people chained to a tree. The new entrants, of course, ask why. St. Peter replies, "Oh, they're Appalachians. If we didn't keep them chained up, they'd be running back home every chance they got...." I feel that in a literary, cultural, and documentary sense *Now & Then* has provided a home base of words, history, and stories for the entire Appalachian region. So often native Appalachians have had to leave the region for economic reasons — and greatly long for that homeplace the rest of their lives. Even those who stay sometimes have the same longing when all of the questionably good changes of "progress" and modernity are considered.

As an important home base for those both within and outside the region, the magazine has provided a forum and a touchstone for that longing. In its pages, we have seen the celebration of what's beautiful in our land and what makes us so particularly *us,* and our eyes have been opened to the underside of abuse and to a culture that's frequently misunderstood. Editor-in-chief Jane Woodside and her staff always tried to present a balanced view and to avoid stereotype — an effort quite contrary to the larger presentation of the region in the national media. For all of these reasons, I have been blessed and deeply grateful to be a part of this endeavor and, if publication ceases, I will miss it terribly.

As *Now & Then's* poetry editor for nearly nine years, I can say that the poets who submitted their work and were published here would equally mourn its passing. I chose poems from the known and unknown, from students who had never published before, from those whose work was very familiar to *Now & Then* readers. In making my choices, I considered only the quality and craft of the work (and, of course, the themes and the necessary focus on the region) and whether the poems were fine enough, as Emily Dickinson wrote, to "take the top of my head off."

Jeff Daniel Marion

Linda Parsons Marion

The national arena of poetry magazines and journals often is not kind or accepting to what is perceived as "regional writing." *Now & Then* allowed these voices and hearts to be heard when they may not have been as acceptable to more mainstream and academic publications. Because the criteria for publication in the magazine included a focus on and connection to the region, the loss for these poets would be especially great.

These criteria, indeed, the existence and core mission of the magazine, allowed them to write from their deepest longings: for home, what it was, what it has become, what it will never be

Passing Poems

All morning the science teacher collected notes,
passed clandestinely, hand to hand,
folded like intricate flowers.
She opened them prepared for scandal—
Did you kiss Justin? Check one: ___yes ___no
instead she pounced on poems.

Now she storms into the English room,
while the students are at band or choir,
demanding an explanation.
She's suspicious—
the writing is rather good
and she's unused to academic passion.

I, guilty party, visiting writer, raise my hand,
thrust suddenly back into the third seat,
second row of adolescence
where survival of the fittest
was a daily show.
I read them Whitman, I whisper.

She stares at me as if I've stashed
a bag of marijuana under my chair,
or crammed a locker
with bottles of Scotch,
luring innocents
into dangerous land.

But I smile, knowing
I've already got them; they're bitten.
Poetry's quick venom plows through their veins,
oozing their angst, their pain.
I've started something.
I hope it spreads.

—Cathy Lentes

Cathy Lentes' poems and essays appear in various magazines, journals, and books, including I Have My Own Song for It: Modern Poems of Ohio *(University of Akron Press). She is a former kindergarten/first grade teacher and has worked for the last 12 years with emerging writers from elementary school age to adult.*

The national arena of poetry magazines and journals often is not kind or accepting to what is perceived as "regional writing." Now & Then allowed these voices and hearts to be heard when they may not have been as acceptable to more mainstream and academic publications.

again. And through this writing and sometimes its publication, their own voices came back to them more strongly than they had ever imagined, embedded in their native culture, surely as echoes ringing from a blue valley. With the possibility of *Now & Then* passing away in its present form, the publications that will similarly welcome and accommodate their work are dwindling. Again, my deepest thanks to Jane Woodside and Nancy Fischman who provided a job of such pleasure and honor, who believed in the necessity of poets and poetry and gave them the breathing space they required to hum and sing right off the page.

Linda Parsons Marion won Now & Then's *poetry competition in 1994. She writes and lives in Knoxville, Tenn.*

Reading, Writing, Region

by Marianne Worthington (reviews editor, 2000-2003)

One of my former teachers called the late writer and Appalachian scholar Jim Wayne Miller a "missionary" for the writing of the southern Appalachian region. One of Miller's innumerable services to Appalachia came in the form of a slim but comprehensive purchase guide for schools and libraries in the region. Miller's *Reading, Writing, Region: A Checklist, Purchase Guide and Directory for School and Community Libraries in Appalachia* was published by the Appalachian Consortium. There is no copyright date, but judging from the entries, the guide was probably prepared in the early 1980s.

Lee Smith had not yet published her seminal novel *Fair and Tender Ladies;* the regional literary magazine *Appalachian Heritage* had not yet moved from Hindman, Ky., to Berea College, and *Now & Then: The Appalachian Magazine* does not appear in Miller's list of regional journals.

Always the evangelist for reading and writing in the region, Miller notes in the introduction of his purchase guide: "In the remaining years of the twentieth century, nothing educators can do is likely to be more important than helping Appalachian people—from grade school through the university—know more about the history, culture, economics and politics of their region."

Any educator brave enough to take up Miller's work in providing a comprehensive checklist on Appalachian materials available to libraries would, today, have difficulty completing the task. For example, the *Journal of Appalachian Studies* now compiles an *annual* bibliography on materials concerning Appalachia published only during that year. And since the mid-1980s, new Appalachian-related books are often the norm rather than the exception for many publishers. Scholars young and old as well as ordinary readers can find just about any reading material they want regarding Appalachian history, culture, politics, economics, religion, language, literature, music, art, crafts, folklore, flora, and fauna.

I like to think that, in some small way, *Now & Then* supported Miller's mission in promoting the reading and writing of the region. I came to *Now & Then* as reviews editor in the summer of 2000. I had admired Sandy Ballard's deeds as reviews editor before me and was honored to be selected to take up her work for *Now & Then* after she assumed the editorship at *Appalachian Journal*.

I like to think that in some small way, Now & Then supported Jim Wayne Miller's mission in promoting the reading and writing of the region.

But in my new position, I became immediately overwhelmed by the sheer volume of books sent to me by presses hoping for a review in our pages. How could I ever choose among them all? And how could I know I was making the right choices? It helped to have a theme to work with each issue and an editor like Jane Woodside who cheerfully but firmly reminded me that we could publish *only* about four reviews an issue. (Only *twelve* reviews a year?) Eventually I adjusted to my guilt (I was always omitting an important work or writer, it seemed) and tried to jam-pack everything else into brief annotated reviews we called "Books in Brief" and "Books Worth Mentioning." (We regularly reviewed music and film as well as books.)

As my farewell to *Now & Then* and as a way to assuage my guilt over not ever working hard enough to recognize all the region's writers, I offer these final recommendations, with apologies to all those writers I'm leaving out again. I hope all of us, like Jim Wayne Miller before us, can continue to be missionaries for reading and writing in the region.

Following are either new publications since the last issue of *Now & Then* or recent publications we never got to mention in the pages of *Now & Then.*

The region's storytellers have always been our backbone. Look for these novels, short story collections, and memoirs:

Linda Scott DeRosier, *Songs of Life and Grace* (University Press of Ky., 2003)
David Dick, *Follow the Storm: A Long Way Home* (Plum Lick, 2002)
Joyce Dyer, *Gum-Dipped: A Daughter Remembers Rubber Town* (University of Akron Press, 2003)
Denise Giardina, *Fallam's Secret* (W.W. Norton, 2003)
Mary Bozeman Hodges, *Plastic Santa and Other Stories* (Tellico, 2003)

Silas House, *A Parchment of Leaves* (Algonquin, 2002)
Sharyn McCrumb, *Ghost Riders* (Dutton, 2003)
Irene McKinney, ed. *Backcountry: Contemporary Writing in West Virginia* (West Virginia University Press, 2002)
Robert Morgan, *Brave Enemies* (Algonquin, 2003)
Ron Rash, *One Foot in Eden* (Novello, 2002)
Crystal Wilkinson, *Water Street* (Toby, 2002)
Meredith Sue Willis, *Oradell at Sea* (Vandalia, 2002)
Isabel Zuber, *Salt* (Picador, 2002)

Poets are working harder than ever for the region. Here are several new and recent poetry collections:

Kathryn Stripling Byer, *Catching Light* (Louisiana State University Press, 2002) and *Wake* (Spring Street, 2003)
Jim Clark, *Buried Land : A Collection of Folk Song and Poetry* (on CD from Eternal Delight, 2003)
Michael Chitwood, *Gospel Road Going* (Tryon, 2002)
Ann Cobb, *Kinfolks & Other Selected Poems,* edited by Jeff Daniel Marion (Hindman Settlement School, 2003)
Steven R. Cope, *In Killdeer's Field* (Wind, 2002)
Irene Blair Honeycutt, *Waiting for the Trout to Speak* (Novello, 2002)
Ron Houchin, *Moveable Darkness* (Salmon, 2002)
Charlie Hughes, *Shifting for Myself* (Wind, 2002)
Leatha Kendrick, *Science in Your Own Back Yard* (Larkspur Press, 2003)
Jeff Mann, *Bones Washed with Wine* (Gival, 2003)
Jeff Daniel Marion, *Ebbing & Flowing Springs: New and Selected Poems and Prose 1976-2001* (Celtic Cat, 2002)
Elaine Fowler Palencia, *The Dailiness of It* (Grex, 2002)
Edwina Pendarvis, *Like the Mountains of China* (Blair, 2003)
R. T. Smith, *The Hollow Log Lounge* (University of Illinois, 2003)
Dan Stryk, *Taping Images to Walls* (Pecan Grove, 2002)
LaRae Van Clief-Stefanon, *Black Swan* (University of Pittsburg, 2002)

Non-fiction recommendations include textbooks, anthologies, oral history, and humor:

Sandra L. Ballard and Patricia L. Hudson, eds., *Listen Here: Women Writing in Appalachia* (University Press of Kentucky, 2003)
John Egerton, *Generations: An American Family* (1983, reprinted by University Press of Kentucky, 2003)
Fred C. Fussell, *Blue Ridge Music Trails: Finding a Place in the Circle* (University of North Carolina Press, 2003)
Dale Jacobs, ed., *The Myles Horton Reader: Education for Social Change* (University of Tennessee Press, 2003)
Ernest Lee, *Being of These Hills: Readings from Appalachian Writers* (Pearson, 2002)
George Ella Lyon, ed., *A Kentucky Christmas* (University Press of Kentucky 2003)
Deborah Vansau McCauley and Laura E. Porter, with Patricia Brunner, photographs by Warren E. Brunner, *Mountain Holiness: A Photographic Narrative* (University of Tennessee Press, 2003)
Felicia Mitchell, ed., *Her Words: Diverse Voices in Contemporary Appalachian Women's Poetry* (University of Tennessee Press, 2002)
Vicki Rozema, *Voices from the Trail of Tears* (John F. Blair, 2003)
Billy Edd Wheeler, ed., *Real Country Humor* (August House, 2002)
John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (University of North Carolina Press, 2002)

Finally, two for kids (and adults):

Paul Brett Johnson, *Little Bunny Foo Foo* (Scholastic, 2004)
Marilyn Kallet, *One for Each Night: Chanukah Tales and Recipes* (Celtic Cat, 2003).

Marianne Worthington served as reviews editor for Now & Then *from the Museums & Archives issue (Vol. 17, No. 3) to the Youth of Appalachia issue (Vol. 20, No. 1). She teaches at Cumberland College, Williamsburg, Ky., and is currently finishing her third year as program chair and site coordinator for the Appalachian Writers Association.*

[Ed. note: I hope Marianne doesn't mind, but I promised Danny Fulks, a frequent contributor to Now & Then, *that if I had room I would mention his new collection,* Tragedy On Greasy Ridge: True Stories From Appalachian Ohio *(Jesse Stuart Foundation, 2003)—NF.]*

Mary Lightfoot

My grandmother was a Creek,
a woman whose own family
hated her Indian blood.

Her husband always told
her she was lucky to have
a home at all:

her family killed by soldiers,
the rest of the tribe driven
west at gunpoint.

A stranger in her own house,
she was mocked or ignored
no matter how many

pans of cornbread she baked,
buckets of water she drew
from the stone well.

But once a day, sitting at
the loom or snapping beans
she sang her mother's songs.

And sometimes when the men
were asleep, she danced in the
dirt of the moonlit yard.

Those steps, the songs said,
wheeled the moon and stars
across the sky,

woke the sun to shine
once more on land that
belonged to no one.

—William Miller

William Miller is an associate professor of English at York College of Pennsylvania. His poems, short stories, and essays have appeared in over 200 journals, including The Southern Review, Louisiana Literature, The Southern Poetry Review, Tar River Review, The Amherst Review, *and* West Branch. *He has published four collections of poetry*—The Trees are Mended, Old Faith, Breathed on Glass, *and* Skywalkers—*and 12 books for children.*

Three Pottery Poems

Union

Having worked the clay
Like the kneading of gray bread
That you hope contains no leaven,
You throw it onto the wheel and start the spin.
Elbows planted,
Your cautious fingers coax the sides
To shape a centering,
A balance solid and safe to leave forever
Or until, your two hands locked
And arms held tight against firm ribs,
Your weight moves in, and you lean into the task,
Committed.

Midwife

The shelves are filled with sugar pots,
With frogs and fantasies half-glazed, bisque rough,
Or still slick with fingerprints.
And as I wedge this lump of clay, I pray
That the centering and shaping will go well,
The clay not ending warped and wet
In the plastic discard bag.
Holding a fetus between death and breath,
The potter works alone.

Pots and Poems

Pottery is more satisfactory than poems,
A blank sheet of paper so sterile
Next to a pregnant lump of clay,
The centering easy to feel and to hold,
The shape obeying the bowl of your hands
And the firing a test against time—
As opposed to poetry, each word struggling to take the form
Of something between a phone call and a code,
And then, when you think you have something solid,
Someone says, "Nice."
That's the best thing about pots—
When you lose them, they're gone.

—Barbara Smith

Barbara Smith is a freelance writer/editor and a medical ethicist. She is emerita professor of literature and writing and chair of the Division of Humanities, Alderson-Broaddus College, Philippi, W.Va.

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Parting

The time has come.
You pass from the room
Like an actor across a stage,
The play done and laughter gone.
In the doorframe you remain
Still as a curtain. You are a darkened
Sheet of glass separating the light
Without from that within.
Your hands close round
Objects you thought always
To hold. The small embrace
Of a word, a smile, a touch,
Curled like a playbill someone
Left when done, lingers.
Your memory is the print we find
Only later your hand left behind.
Things retreat from your fingers
Now like summer lightning
Across a sky where the image
Has vanished but the feeling remains.
You see for the first and last time,
As if viewed through glass, obliquely
And too late, how all that you made
Has you unmade.

—*Ned Irwin*

Ned Irwin is university archivist at the Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University.

WAYNE SPEER

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services gathered together on Jean Haskell's deck in 1993 during better economic times and a full staff. Present at that time were: (from l-r, standing) Pat Arnow, Charles Moore, Scott Schwartz, Sarah Hankins, Georgia Greer, Nancy Jane Earnest, Harold Stewart, Penelope Lane, Blair White, Norma Myers, Margaret Carr, and John Ostheimer, then Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; (sitting, from l-r) Helen Roseberry, Frieda Souder, Jean Haskell, and Jane Harris Woodside.

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Coming up:

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Now & Then: An Uncertain Future